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**Paying for Progress:  
Politics, Ethnicity and Schools in a Mexican Sierra, 1875-1930**

**by  
Ariadna Acevedo-Rodrigo**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in History**

**University of Warwick, Department of History**

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**A mi madre**

**A la memoria de mi padre**

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Like the Nahua and Totonac students who attended the schools studied in this thesis, I have found writing in a second language is no easy endeavour, for helping overcome such difficulties I thank Guy Thomson and David Wood and I hope their efforts have not been in vain. The failings of this study are all my own.

#### Declaration

I declare that none of the material contained in this thesis has been used by the author before, nor has it been published.

I declare that this thesis is my own work and it has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

## Abstract

This thesis studies the secular schools sustained by two rural municipalities of majority Indian population in the Sierra Norte de Puebla in the periods before and after the 1910 Revolution (1875-1930). In order to assess the role of schools in the community and their contribution to nation-state building, it examines changes in the tax system that affected educational provision, the mutual interaction between schools, politics and inter-ethnic relations at the local level, and the methods used and problems faced when teaching Indian children to read and write in Spanish.

The approach of social history is followed to address these questions, seeking to strike a balance between the necessary recognition of the agency of subordinate groups and the complexities of power relations that kept them dominated. Taking a local perspective and using a variety of sources including previously untapped municipal archives, this study both complements and challenges the history of education and nation-state building in modern Mexico.

This thesis shows how, before 1910, municipal schools were successfully sustained by locally-controlled taxes and how post-revolutionary policies, contrary to the prevalent view in Mexican historiography, did not necessarily have positive consequences for education. In this case they had a negative impact by abolishing the tax system that had sustained schools, without providing an effective alternative. In organising themselves to fund schools, communities proved to be stronger than the post-revolutionary state.

Seeking to contribute to an incipient but growing history of Indian education, this study analyses classroom practice, showing how speakers of Indian languages were at a disadvantage in school. After the revolution, there was a growing awareness of the specific needs of Indian children, but the methods adopted did not necessarily result in more effective learning of Spanish. In fact, the thesis argues that throughout the period of study schools contributed to non-Indian domination by reproducing and reinforcing Indians' linguistic disadvantage.

## List of Abbreviations

### Archival

ACEP	Archivo del Congreso del Estado de Puebla
AGAP	Archivo General Agrario de Puebla
AGEP	Archivo General del Estado de Puebla
AGEP-SEP-MPE	AGEP, Secretaría de Educación Pública, Movimiento de Personal y Todo lo Relacionado con Escuelas
AHSEP	Archivo Histórico de la Secretaría de Educación Pública
AMC	Archivo Municipal de Cuetzalan
AMH	Archivo Municipal de Huehuetla
AMT	Archivo Municipal de Tetela de Ocampo
AMZ	Archivo Municipal de Zacatlán
AMZx	Archivo Municipal de Zacapoaxtla
ASMTz	Archivo de la Junta Auxiliar de San Miguel Tzinacapan

### Periodicals

AE	American Ethnologist
AHR	American Historical Review
BLAR	Bulletin of Latin American Research
CSSH	Comparative Studies in Society and History
HAHR	Hispanic American Historical Review
HG	Historia y Grafía
HM	Historia Mexicana
IRS	International Review of Sociology
Jl-AS	Journal of Inter American Studies
JLAS	Journal of Latin American Studies
LARR	Latin American Research Review
PH	Paedagogica Historica
REIS	Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas
RMS	Revista Mexicana de Sociología

**Editorial and Institutional**

BUAP	Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla
CEDLA	Centro de Estudios de Latinoamérica (Amsterdam)
CEE	Centro de Estudios Educativos
CIESAS	Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social
COMIE	Comisión Mexicana de Investigación Educativa
DIE-CINVESTAV-IPN	Departamento de Investigaciones Educativas, Centro de Investigación y Estudios Avanzados del Instituto Politécnico Nacional
FCE	Fondo de Cultura Económica
INAH	Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia
INI	Instituto Nacional Indigenista
ISCEEM	Instituto Superior de Ciencias de la Educación del Estado de México
SEP	Secretaría de Educación Pública
TTOSA	Taller de Tradición Oral de la Sociedad Agropecuaria
UAEM	Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México
UCLA	University of California Los Angeles
UDG	Universidad de Guadalajara
UIA	Universidad Iberoamericana
UNAM	Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
UV	Universidad de Veracruz



## Introduction

Twenty, even ten years ago, this introduction might have started with an account of how a history of nation-state building told from the centres of power and the perspective of the elite has silenced the voices of the less powerful and of many more historical actors who were present in the process too. It might have followed by observing that the actual impact of educational systems on the future citizens of the nation, and their contribution to state building, have been taken for granted, or exaggerated, rather than subjected to historical research.<sup>1</sup> Such assertions can simply no longer be made. Mexican historiography now has a healthy and growing corpus of 'bottom-up' social and cultural history, which includes the history of education.<sup>2</sup> This thesis seeks to make a contribution to this history from below by exploring how the educational projects of the modernising nation-state were received in a rural and indigenous environment.

This work studies the secular schools that were sustained by two municipalities of majority Indian population in the Sierra Norte de Puebla during

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<sup>1</sup> Eugen Weber's study of France was a common object of criticism for exaggerating the capacity and success of schools in turning peasants into modern citizens. However, French social history has already redressed Weber's view, see Roger Magraw, *France, 1800-1910. A Social History* (Harlow: Longman, 2002), ch. 5. Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernisation of Rural France, 1870-1914* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1977).

<sup>2</sup> See the articles in Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniel Nugent (eds.) *Everyday Forms of State Formation. Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994). For a useful review of social and cultural history, focusing on peasant politics, see Mary K. Vaughan, 'Cultural Approaches to Peasant Politics in the Mexican Revolution', *HAHR*, 79:2 (1999), pp. 269-305. For an incisive and less optimistic review of Mexican cultural history see Eric Van Young, 'The New Cultural History Comes to Old Mexico', *HAHR*, 79:2 (1999), pp. 211-247.

the period 1875-1930. In order to assess the role of schools in the community and their contribution to nation-state building, I examine changes in the tax system that affected educational provision, how municipal governments and communities adapted to changing policies in order to sustain public instruction, the mutual interaction between schools, politics and inter-ethnic relations at the local level and, finally, the methods used and the problems faced when teaching Indian children to read and write in Spanish.

In order to address these questions I use the methods of social history, seeking to strike a balance between the necessary recognition of the agency of subordinate groups and the complexities of power relations that kept them dominated.<sup>3</sup> Many of the questions posed overlap with themes in postcolonial and subaltern history.<sup>4</sup> Although the cultural perspectives of works influenced by literary criticism and postmodern theories provide interesting new insights into Latin American history, this thesis focuses on the more institutional aspects of local government, schooling, language and ethnicity, some of which have been undeservedly neglected.<sup>5</sup> Below I outline how my perspective fits in with the current history of education.

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<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of the problem of agency in social and cultural history see Eric Van Young, 'The New Cultural History', pp. 243-245 and Alan Knight, 'Subalterns, Signifiers and Statistics: Perspectives on Mexican Historiography', *LARR*, 37:2 (2002), pp. 141-142.

<sup>4</sup> Guillermo Zermefio, 'Condición de subalternidad, condición postmoderna y saber histórico ¿Hacia una nueva forma de escritura de la historia?' *HG*, 12 (1999), pp. 11-47; Florencia Mallon 'The Promise and Dilemma of Subaltern Studies: Perspectives from Latin American History', *AHR*, 99:5 (1994), pp. 1491-1515; John Beverley, *Subalternity and Representation. Arguments in Cultural Theory* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); Mark Thurner and Andrés Guerrero (eds.) *After Spanish Rule. Postcolonial Predicaments of the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

<sup>5</sup> Some cultural issues are discussed at different points, but without resorting to cultural theory. On the neglect of the study of the institutional aspects of Indian pueblos after Independence see Emilio

Foucauldian studies which see schools as key sites of the disciplining of selves, producing the individualised subjects of the modern state, have had little influence on Mexican historiography.<sup>6</sup> Michel de Certeau's criticism that these approaches deny agency to historical actors, and ultimately fail to explain complex processes of domination, has been endorsed by practitioners in the Mexican history of education (including the author of this thesis) who find in archives and oral history abundant evidence of how students, teachers and communities transformed the state's educational programmes through opposition, resistance, appropriation and re-interpretation.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, at least for the case of rural areas, it is clear that the incipient educational system of the late-nineteenth century was too weak to discipline children, or their families and communities, who had to give up some of their children's work time to schooling. The Revolution of 1910 to a great extent destroyed this incipient and limited educational provision, and when communities sought to re-open schools (often at their own initiative rather than that of the state or federal governments) they did it

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Kourí, 'Interpreting the Expropriation of Indian Pueblo Lands in Porfirian Mexico: The Unexamined Legacies of Andrés Molina Enríquez', *HAHR*, 82:1 (2002), pp. 69-117.

<sup>6</sup> The key work is Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison* (London: Penguin, 1991), especially Part Three. For Foucauldian approaches in the Spanish history of education (authored by sociologists and educationalists) see Julia Varela and Fernando Álvarez-Uría, *Arqueología de la escuela* (Madrid: La Piqueta, n.d.) and Jorge Larrosa (ed.) *Escuela, Poder y Subjetivación* (Madrid: La Piqueta, n.d.). For sociological and historical research in Anglophone countries see Stephen J. Ball (ed.) *Foucault and Education. Disciplines and Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 1990).

<sup>7</sup> For the influence of Michel de Certeau see Elsie Rockwell, 'Imaginando lo no documentado: Del archivo a la cultura escolar'; Mary K. Vaughan, 'La historia de la educación y las regiones en México: Cómo leer los informes de los inspectores escolares' and Guillermo de la Peña, 'Comentario a la Ponencia de Mary K. Vaughan', all in Alicia Civera, Carlos Escalante and Luz Elena Galván (eds.) *Debates y desafíos en la historia de la educación en México* (Mexico: Colegio

on their own terms, albeit under circumstances that were not of their own making. Officials from the Ministry of Education seeking to open federal schools often found fierce resistance, and where they were apparently welcome, they soon realised they would have to adapt their programmes and objectives if they wished to attract any children to the classroom.<sup>8</sup>

Ultimately, to Mexicans and Mexicanists, and despite the existence of a hegemonic party-state in the twentieth century,<sup>9</sup> the Foucaultian account of the emergence of a modern state (and an educational system) with a highly rational, efficient and impersonal bureaucracy, effectively controlling the population and following standardised procedures, is wrong. Personalism and a high degree of flexibility in implementing (or not) legislation and policies pervade the nineteenth- and twentieth-century history of the Mexican state.<sup>10</sup> In this flexibility lay both its strength and its weakness.<sup>11</sup> The prime objective of this thesis is not to

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Mexiquense-ISCEEM, 2002). For de Certeau's criticism of Foucault see Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), ch. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Mary K. Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997).

<sup>9</sup> Here the term 'hegemonic' is used as in political science to refer to a political system where the same dominant party occupies government for an extended period of time and may encroach upon state structures as in the Mexican case. Jeffrey W. Rubin, 'Decentering the Regime. Culture and Regional Politics in Mexico', *LARR*, 31:3 (1996), pp. 85-95.

<sup>10</sup> Sociologist Fernando Escalante has observed for nineteenth-century Mexico that '...law does not oblige the state, nor its citizens, but it is useful, especially against enemies. The authority of the state has to develop in the gap between the law that in principle all will obey, and the practice whereby disobedience is negotiated'. Although Escalante has a rather negative view of this negotiation, and the case of the Sierra Norte de Puebla shows a kinder side to it, I agree with his underlying premise. Fernando Escalante, *Ciudadanos Imaginarios. Memorial de los afanes y desventuras de la virtud y apología del vicio triunfante en la República Mexicana –Tratado de Moral Pública–* (Mexico: Colegio de México, 1992), p. 292, my translation.

<sup>11</sup> Flexibility in implementing legislation and policies, although it pervades the literature, has not been examined systematically. For an exception, taking a 'bottom-up' perspective, see Nuijten's

focus on the nature of the modern Mexican state, but to contribute to a body of research that questions unexamined assumptions about the strength of the Mexican state<sup>12</sup> and its educational system, and makes explicit what it means by a 'strong' or a 'weak' state.<sup>13</sup> What this thesis does share with Foucaultian approaches is the underlying premise that there is no all-controlling centre of power, such as the Presidential Palace in Mexico City's *Zócalo*, or 'the state', but that power pervades society and is worth studying at the peripheries as at the centre. One of these peripheries is the Sierra Norte of the south-eastern state of Puebla.

In the Sierra Norte de Puebla, regional leaders pragmatically implemented liberal legislation, negotiating with a population who embraced such policies selectively and articulated them with older, non-liberal practices. It was this flexibility that made liberalism 'popular'.<sup>14</sup> From the point of view of liberal intellectuals in Mexico City, the popular liberalism of the Sierra, where, for instance, liberal *Ayuntamientos* coexisted with the compulsory offices of Indian cargo systems (the rationale of which lay in the service to the community rather

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anthropological study: Monique Nuijten, *Power, Community and the State: The Political Anthropology of Organisation in Mexico*. (London: Pluto Press, 2003).

<sup>12</sup> Jeffrey W. Rubin, 'Decentering the Regime', pp. 85-126.

<sup>13</sup> The lack of definition of what historians and social scientists mean by a 'strong' or a 'weak' state is not exclusive to the Mexican case, see Bob Jessop, 'Bringing the State Back in (Yet Again): Reviews, Revisions, Rejections and Redirections', *IRS*, 11:2 (2001), pp. 149-173.

<sup>14</sup> This has been the subject of Guy Thomson's research: Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism, Politics and Popular Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Mexico. Juan Francisco Lucas and the Puebla Sierra*. (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1999); Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan (Sierra de Puebla): The Rise and Fall of "Pala" Agustín Dieguillo, 1861-1894', *HAHR*, 71:2 (1991), pp. 205-258; 'Popular Aspects of Liberalism in Mexico, 1848-1888', *BLAR*, 10:3 (1991), pp. 265-292; 'Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism: The National Guard, Philharmonic Corps, and Patriotic Juntas in Mexico, 1847-1888', *JLAS*, 22:1 (1990), pp. 31-68.

than individual participation), was not liberalism. Yet the Sierra population nonetheless provided crucial support to the struggles of the mid- to late-nineteenth century, making it possible for liberal intellectuals to discuss their theories in the newspapers of the victorious liberal order. The implementation of liberal educational legislation was also flexible. All girls aged 6-12 and all boys aged 6-14 were obliged to attend. Yet only a small minority did. Still, the implementation of Reform Laws substantially reduced the role of the Church in education at the same time that the Sierra population sustained, through the payment of head taxes, a network of secular schools that was impressive for a rural region. So far, it would seem, popular liberalism did more than pay lip service to the dreams of the liberal state.

Yet, at the turn of the twentieth century, the literacy rate in the region was a mere 20 per cent and increased only minimally in subsequent years.<sup>15</sup> When the Ministry of Education's officials visited the Sierra in the 1920s, they observed that most of the population could not understand Spanish, let alone could read and write. Such a result, of course, could be explained by the fact that this was, to a great extent, a rural region. Serranos would have found little use for literacy, and indeed, the disaggregation of the 20 per cent figure shows an uneven distribution, with most literate people living in the municipalities of the south, closer to Puebla City, and which were seats of the district capitals and regional centres of trade. But if this was the case, why sustain so many schools? The short answer is that the school served a political role, a symbol of a town or village's status as a civilised society, educating a tiny minority who would fulfil the local government's

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<sup>15</sup> Mary K. Vaughan, 'Economic Growth and Literacy in Late Nineteenth-Century Mexico. The Case of Puebla' in Gabriel Tortella (ed.) *Education and Economic Development Since the Industrial Revolution* (Valencia: Generalitat, 1990), pp. 101-102.

administrative duties. The long answer exposes the complexities of the role of schools in the community and their relation to changing forms of government and inter-ethnic relations; this is the subject of this thesis.

### The Importance of Municipal Schools

The most favoured object of study in post-Independence history of education are the federal schools of the 1920-1940 period.<sup>16</sup> Because such studies found that communities' response to federal schools depended to a great extent on their previous experience of education, studies on the Porfiriato began to appear. Nonetheless, this research is still incipient and with the exception of Milada Bazant's study of the State of Mexico, they focus on urban education, reinforcing the belief that rural schools were practically non-existent in the Porfiriato.<sup>17</sup> For the period after 1911, only one book-length study has included municipal schools,

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<sup>16</sup> Juan Alfonseca, 'Escuela y sociedad en los distritos de Texcoco y Chalco' in Luz Elena Galván (ed.) *Miradas en torno a la educación de ayer* (Mexico: COMIE-UDG, 1997); Juan Alfonseca, 'La escuela rural federal y la transformación de los supuestos sociales de la escolarización en una región del Estado de México, 1923-1940' in Alicia Civera, Carlos Escalante and Luz Elena Galván (eds.) *Debates y desafíos*; Juan Alfonseca, 'El papel de las Juntas y los Comités de Educación en la apropiación local de la Escuela Rural Federal' in *Anuario de la Sociedad Mexicana de Historia de la Educación* (Madrid: Pomares, forthcoming); Elsie Rockwell, "Schools of the Revolution: Enacting and contesting state forms in Tlaxcala, 1910-1930" in Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniel Nugent (eds.) *Everyday Forms of State Formation*; Elsie Rockwell, *Hacer escuela: transformaciones de la cultura escolar, Tlaxcala, 1910-1940* (PhD thesis, DIE-CINVESTAV-IPN, Mexico, 1996); Susana Quintanilla and Mary K. Vaughan (eds.), *Escuela y Sociedad en el periodo cardenista* (Mexico: FCE, 1998); Mary K. Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution*.

<sup>17</sup> Milada Bazant, *En busca de la modernidad: Procesos educativos en el Estado de México, 1873-1912* (Mexico: Colegio Mexiquense, 2002); Verónica Arellano, *La educación elemental en la Ciudad de México, 1896-1908* (MA thesis, DIE-CINVESTAV-IPN, Mexico, 2002); Luz Elena Galván, Susana Quintanilla and Clara Ramírez (eds.) *Historiografía de la educación en México* (Mexico: COMIE, 2003), pp. 85-177.

looking at the 1917-1921 period in Mexico City.<sup>18</sup> No research has broached the Porfiriato and the Revolution except at the national level.<sup>19</sup>

The history of Mexican education for the modern period has focused on the federal schools opened by the Ministry of Education (*Secretaría de Educación Pública*, SEP) after its creation in 1921. Before 1921, each state in the federation had its own educational legislation and administration. This did not disappear with the creation of the SEP, but since then the states have shared the responsibility to provide education with the federal government. The SEP designed an ambitious programme to transform the Mexican countryside through rural schools, which have deservedly attracted much attention by historians. The federal rural schools of the revolution are a privileged site from which to observe the construction of the new regime.

Such focus, however, excludes a great many schools. In Puebla, not an exceptional case, six years after the state government had signed a contract with the SEP for the opening of federal schools, there were only 218 such schools, in contrast to 1,238 sustained by the state and municipal governments.<sup>20</sup> The official figures, moreover, obscure the fact that 'municipal' schools were not paid for by the state, nor by its citizens through a system of taxation, but by the population's

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<sup>18</sup> Patience Schell, *Church and State Education in Revolutionary Mexico City* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2003).

<sup>19</sup> The standard work examining both the Porfiriato and the Revolution still is Mary K. Vaughan's book of 1982, an extremely useful national and top-down account (albeit following reproductionist theories at odds with today's emphasis on agency). Mary K. Vaughan, *The State, Education and Social Class in Mexico, 1880-1928*, (De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1982)

<sup>20</sup> All other states, except the State of Mexico, had significantly fewer federal schools than Puebla. SEP, *Noticia Estadística sobre la Educación Pública de México para el año de 1928* (Mexico, 1929). The contract between Puebla and the SEP was signed in May 1922, see Estela Munguía, *Continuidad y cambio en la legislación educativa de las escuelas elementales públicas de Puebla, 1893-1928*. (MA thesis, UNAM, Mexico, 2003), p. 154.



‘voluntary donations’. The organisation of such donations, which will be examined in detail in the second part of this thesis, blurred the boundaries between public and private, at a time when some local societies were stronger than the state, insofar as they were capable of providing the education the state and federal governments could not.

It is an irony of the history of education that most studies are framed within social and cultural history, and take a decidedly ‘bottom-up’ approach, yet they have failed to account for this vast number of schools. The recent historiography on federal schools during 1920-1940 criticised revisionist perspectives which saw the Mexican state as an all-powerful agent of domination. Instead, historians of education joined post-revisionists in de-emphasising the strength of the state and underlining that, in the formative years of 1920-1940, the Mexican state was not yet the Leviathan it became in later years. Indeed, historians have found that teachers, the agents of the state, far from imposing their radical programmes on a passive populace, had to negotiate with families and communities. Yet, by studying only federal schools, and leaving all the others out of the picture, these studies have inadvertently contributed to the very same approach they have criticised. They see post-revolutionary education only from the point of federal penetration of the communities, even if they focus on the community’s response. We have thus a historiography of education which gives the false impression that federal schools were everywhere. This thesis seeks to redress the balance by studying two municipalities, amongst many, which were untouched by the federal rural schools of the Revolution until the mid-1930s.

Focusing on the municipality and the pueblo I seek to complement the existing historiography of the Sierra, which has either taken a regional perspective

or chosen the district as its unit of analysis.<sup>21</sup> Research on the smaller scale of the *municipio* has allowed us to explore in greater depth aspects that escape studies with a broader perspective. These include different degrees of non-Indian encroachment upon the administration of the *cabeceras* and the subsequent accommodation reached between Indians and non-Indians, as well as the articulation of the legal prescriptions of the municipal government with the customary Indian system of compulsory cargos. Such accommodation and articulation, as will be shown in this thesis, were not only crucial aspects of local politics but were also key to the funding and running of schools.

Although Florencia Mallon dedicated a chapter to 'hegemonic processes in the community' for the Sierra Norte de Puebla, her account of the nineteenth-century Indian community focused on the role of the National Guards and the Indian traditional authorities. She thus excluded from her analysis the non-Indian secretaries and teachers who, as had already been pointed out by Guy Thomson, and is explored in greater detail in this thesis, were key actors in these communities, performing a mediating role with the outside.<sup>22</sup> As Keith Brewster has observed, if we rule these non-Indian caciques out of the equation, we are missing a crucial aspect of the community's internal dynamics and its links with the outside world, thus doing little service to the furthering of our understanding

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<sup>21</sup> This is the case of the political, social and cultural history written by Florencia Mallon (for 1854-1876), Guy Thomson (for 1854-1917), Keith Brewster (for 1917-1930) and Mary Kay Vaughan (1930-1940). Florencia Mallon, *Peasant and Nation. The Making of Postcolonial Mexico and Peru*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*; Keith Brewster, *Militarism, Ethnicity and Politics in the Sierra Norte de Puebla* (University of Arizona Press, 2003); Mary K. Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution*.

<sup>22</sup> Florencia Mallon, *Peasant and Nation*, ch. 3. Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, especially pp. 6-8.

of indigenous peasant agency.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, in looking at the different forms of accommodation and articulation between Indians and non-Indians in this thesis, the contemporary terms municipality (*municipio*), headtown or municipal seat (*cabecera*), pueblo (*pueblo sujeto*), barrios and rancherías (dispersed settlements) have been preferred to that of 'community', a blanket term coined in the twentieth century which obscures differences between localities with different political status.<sup>24</sup>

I selected for this study two municipalities in the majority Nahua Cuetzalan (in the district of Zacapoaxtla) and the majority Totonac Huehuetla (in the district of Zacatlán).<sup>25</sup> Both followed the regional cacique Juan Francisco Lucas during the liberal struggles of the nineteenth century and his successor Gabriel Barrios during the Revolution by joining the Constitutionalists. Both are in the semi-tropical northern Sierra, relatively far from their respective district capitals in the south, which were much better linked to Puebla and Mexico City. Cuetzalan, and to an even greater extent Huehuetla, are both in the periphery of the Sierra [See Map]. By looking at such locations, I have been able to measure the capacity of regional caciques and of the state to reach the remotest

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<sup>23</sup> Recently for Andean Peru, Mark Thurner has rightly underlined the increasing dependence of Indian caciques on literate non-Indian officials after Independence. Mark Thurner, *From Two Republics to One Divided. Postcolonial Nationmaking in Andean Peru* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), pp. 17, 141-145. Keith Brewster, 'Caciquismo in the Sierra Norte de Puebla: The Case of Gabriel Barrios Cabrera', paper presented at the Cacique and Caudillo Conference organised by the University of Utrecht and the Latin American Centre, St Antony's College, Oxford 2002.

<sup>24</sup> The terms pueblos, barrios and rancherías have not been italicised because of their constant use throughout the thesis.

<sup>25</sup> Although the district of Zacapoaxtla has received attention by Vaughan, she focused on the municipality of the same name and the adjoining municipality of Xochiapulco because federal

municipalities, and the role that schools played in articulating such communities with the outside world.

The uneven character of the primary and secondary sources available for each municipality and the ethnographic nature of this local study prevent the strictly symmetrical and systematic comparison favoured by the practitioners of larger-scale comparative history and historical sociology.<sup>26</sup> However, where sufficient evidence on one aspect of politics, ethnicity or schools has been found for both municipalities, comparisons have been drawn. Within each municipality, wherever possible, comparisons are made between headtowns and pueblos. In other cases, the advantage of looking at two municipalities lies not in contrast and comparison but in the fact that different but related pieces of information complement each other. For instance, Cuetzalan provided evidence of the language problems faced by Indian children in the classroom, while Huehuetla supplemented these findings with insight into the reading and writing methods used by teachers.

The thesis is divided into two parts, one for the Porfiriato (1876-1911) and one for the Revolution (1911-1930). Each part has three chapters: an introductory chapter providing the wider picture by looking at developments at the regional and state level; and a chapter for each of the two municipalities studied. Chapter One gives a broad view of the implementation of liberal policies in the Sierra, focusing on the transformation experienced in local government and education. These issues are explored in greater depth for each of the municipalities in Chapters Two

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schools opened in this area. Cuetzalan only receives attention as a point of contrast. Huehuetla has not received any attention from historians. Mary K. Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution*, ch. 5.

and Three. Both discuss local politics, inter-ethnic relations and schools but Chapter Two for Cuetzalan focuses on taxation, whereas Chapter Three for Huehuetla focuses on inter-ethnic relations in municipal and pueblo councils. Part One finishes with a comparative section which contrasts the experience of Cuetzalan and Huehuetla, with that of the liberal bastion of Xochiapulco, where Mary K. Vaughan has shown Porfirian schools to have been so successful.<sup>27</sup> I argue that the differences in these municipalities' experience of local government and in their relations with the state, resulted in different forms of citizenship. These local variations in the articulation of communities with the nation-state account for the differences in the role of schools in the community and in the educational results obtained.

Part Two begins with Chapter Four, which opens with an examination of Porfirian order at the local level, focusing on the role of village bands compared to schools. This is followed by an account of the changes brought about by the Revolution, especially with regard to fiscal centralisation and the erosion of local autonomy. Chapters Five and Six discuss in greater depth the changes in the administration, inter-ethnic relations and the running of schools in Cuetzalan and Huehuetla. Additionally, in the chapter for Huehuetla, the new policies for Indian education and the teaching of Spanish are considered. The last section in Chapter Five, 'The Legacy of the Revolution', presents conclusions for the case of Cuetzalan and the last section in Chapter Six, 'Federal, State and Local Initiatives', presents conclusions for Huehuetla and draws comparisons with

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<sup>26</sup> Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers, 'The Use of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry', *CSSH*, 22:2 (1980), pp. 174-197 and Ramón Ramos, 'Problemas metodológicos y textuales de la sociología histórica', *REIS*, 63 (1993), pp. 7-28.

<sup>27</sup> Mary K. Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution*, pp. 108-112.

Cuetzalan. In both municipalities, changes brought about by the Revolution resulted in the blurring of the boundaries between private and public, with communities organising themselves to sustain schools in the absence of educational provision by the state or federal governments.

Finally, the use of the terms Indian and non-Indian in this study should be explained. Linguistic criteria have been used to differentiate between Indians (speakers of languages of pre-Columbian origin) and non-Indians (speakers of Spanish). Language correlated with distinctive practices: for instance, speakers of Indian languages participated in cargo systems and had distinctive naming practices or distinctive surnames. This is not to say that there were fixed 'Indian' and 'non-Indian' identities. As will be seen in Chapters Five and Six, there were people with clearly hybrid identities who cannot be put into rigid compartments, such as speakers of an indigenous language who had learned Spanish, perhaps learned to read and write, and moved with ease between their original communities and the outside Spanish-speaking world.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, in some cases it is impossible for the historian to know whether an individual was a person who

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<sup>28</sup> For the varying descriptions of Sierra cacique Gabriel Barrios as mestizo or Indian see Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, pp. 8-10; For a fictionalised account of Indian acculturation in Jonotla (near Cuetzalan) see the work of anthropologist Gregory G. Reck, *In the Shadow of Tláloc: Life in a Mexican Village* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978), which bears many similarities to Oscar Lewis, *Pedro Martinez. A Mexican Peasant and his Family* (New York: Vintage, 1964). For the Sierra more generally see Hugo G Nutini and Barry L. Isaac, *Los pueblos de habla náhuatl de la región de Puebla y Tlaxcala* (Mexico: SEP-INI, 1974), pp. 389-396; Pierre Beaucage, 'The Opossum and the Coyote: Ethnic Identity and Ethnohistory in the Sierra Norte de Puebla (Mexico) in Amaryll Chanady (ed.) *Latin American Identity and Constructions of Difference* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994). On ethnic identities elsewhere in Mexico: Judith Friedlander, *Being Indian in Hueyapan. A study of forced identity in contemporary Mexico* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975); Alan Knight, 'Racism, Revolution and *Indigenismo*: Mexico, 1910-1940' in Richard Graham (ed.) *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), p. 99.

had Spanish as a first language (a mestizo) or an acculturated Indian, who learned Spanish as a second language and might therefore become mestizo (as an achieved status). In the last section in Chapter One, under the rubric of 'Naming Citizens', the terms used in official documents to refer to the population during 1875-1930, and the methodology used to identify different ethnic groups in the historical record, are discussed.

No differentiation has been made between Creoles/Whites and mestizos. Although some prominent families in the Sierra were somatically European (pale-skinned, blue-eyed), may have had more 'refined' customs and differentiated themselves from mestizos, there is not enough evidence of the practical consequences of such distinctions for them to be significant to this study.<sup>29</sup> By contrast, differences between Spanish-speakers and speakers of Indian languages were much clearer and will be discussed throughout the thesis.

Among the Nahuatl and Totonacs living in the Sierra during 1875-1930, there is evidence of neither a pan-Indian identity nor separate 'tribal' identities. Instead, as has been observed for other groups in Mexico, evidence suggests that

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<sup>29</sup> Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, pp. 29, 112-114. Keith Brewster, *Caciquismo in post-revolutionary Mexico: The case of Gabriel Barrios Cabrera in the Sierra Norte de Puebla*, (PhD thesis, University of Warwick, 1995), ch. 1, 6. Interviews with Margot Aparicio Mora, Huehuetla 11 July 2003; Emma Flores, Cuetzalan 25 Aug and 18 Sep 2001 and Orense Torres González, Huehuetla, 19 May 2002.

their primary allegiance lay in the pueblo.<sup>30</sup> There existed, nonetheless, among Indians, a self-definition vis-à-vis outsiders which included non-Indians.<sup>31</sup>

Anthropologists have noted that the Nahuas and Totonacs of the Sierra Norte de Puebla, despite their different languages, share many traits, such as forms of government, family organisation, ritual kinship and dress, with only minor variations. In fact, greater differences have been found between Totonacs in lowland Veracruz<sup>32</sup> and Totonacs in the Sierra (including dialect variations), than between Nahuas and Totonacs in the Sierra. Geographic and socio-economic factors explain similarities and differences between and among Nahuas and Totonacs.<sup>33</sup> The findings for Cuetzalan and Huehuetla reinforce this view. Differences in politics and schooling between these two municipalities were

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<sup>30</sup> Alan Knight, 'Racism, Revolution, and *Indigenismo*', pp. 75-76. For identification with the pueblo in the colonial period see Bernardo García Martínez, 'Pueblos de Indios, Pueblos de Castas: New Settlements and Traditional Corporate Organisation in Eighteenth-Century New Spain' in Arij Ouweneel (ed.) *The Indian Community of colonial Mexico. Fifteen Essays on Land Tenure, Corporate Organisation, Ideology and Village Politics* (Amsterdam: CEDLA, 1990), p. 103.

<sup>31</sup> For the twentieth-century Sierra anthropologists have found Indians' self-definition as *maseual* (Indian commoner in Nahuatl) or *tutunaku* (Totonac) versus outsiders *koyot* (in Nahuatl) and *luua'n* (in Totonac), including non-Indians. Pierre Beaucage, 'The Opossum and the Coyote', pp. 159-163. For the use of the term *koyot* to designate Spanish speakers by Nahuas during the 1920s see Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, p. 55; for its use in oral history see TTOSA, *Tejuan tikintenkakiliayaj in toueyitatajuan. Les oíamos contar a nuestros abuelos*. (Mexico: INAH, 1994), pp. 29-31.

<sup>32</sup> Veracruz is the state adjoining the Sierra Norte de Puebla to the northeast.

<sup>33</sup> Vicente Lombardo Toledano, 'Geografía de las lenguas de la Sierra de Puebla' in Marcela Lombardo and Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán (eds.) *Escritos acerca de la situación de los indígenas* (Mexico: Centro de Estudios Vicente Lombardo Toledano, 1991), pp. 77, 91, 93-94, 101-103; H. R. Harvey and Isabel Kelly, 'The Totonac' in Evon Z. Vogt (ed.) *Handbook of Middle American Indians. Ethnology. Part Two* (Austin: University of Texas, 1969), pp. 638-641, 670-671; Alain Ichon, *La religión de los totonacas en la Sierra* (Mexico: INI, 1990), pp. 10-11; Emilia Velázquez Hernández *Cuando los arrieros perdieron sus caminos. La conformación regional del Totonacapan* (Zamora: El Colegio de Michoacán, 1995), pp. 36-52.



explained by their distinct histories of non-Indian immigration and the resulting forms of accommodation reached between Indians and the newcomers.

## Sources

The bulk of this study is based upon research in the municipal archives of Cuetzalan and Huehuetla, as well as those of their respective district capitals, Zacapoaxtla and Zacatlán. They have abundant official correspondence, including on educational matters. Additionally, the pueblo of San Miguel Tzinacapan (municipality of Cuetzalan) has preserved documents spanning the 1870-1916 period. This is a small but very rich archive, which only partly overlaps with that of the headtown of Cuetzalan. In Cuetzalan private libraries provided useful local studies, both manuscript and published.

As all historians of Puebla know, there is no pre-1940 archive for the state executive. However, the Archivo General del Estado de Puebla has a valuable, albeit incomplete, collection of the official correspondence of the Junta Directiva de Educación in Puebla from 1917, including state school inspectors' reports. These were particularly useful because during the 1920s there were a few attempts to obtain state funds for Cuetzalan's schools and because state inspectors visited some of the many schools (including those of Cuetzalan and Huehuetla) sustained by the communities through donations. Although this thesis does not study federal schools, the Archivo Histórico de la Secretaría de Educación Pública has provided useful information. I have used SEP Inspectors' reports for the districts of Zacapoaxtla, Zacatlán and Tetela, which have scant but revealing observations on inter-ethnic relations and language problems for the 1920s.

Local newspapers lodged in the Biblioteca Luis Cabrera in Zacatlán provided valuable information for specific municipalities in the Sierra as well as a wider regional and national view. Official publications of the state government were found in Archivo del Congreso del Estado de Puebla and the Biblioteca Lafragua.

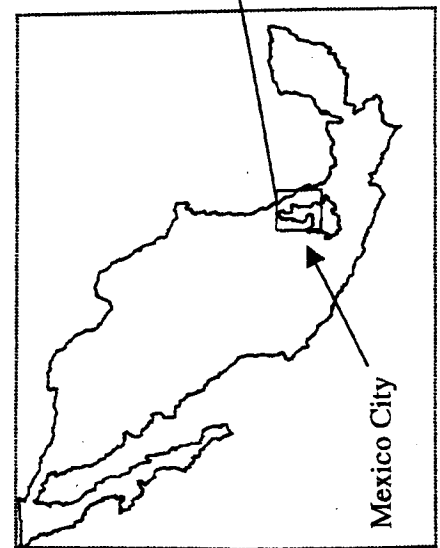
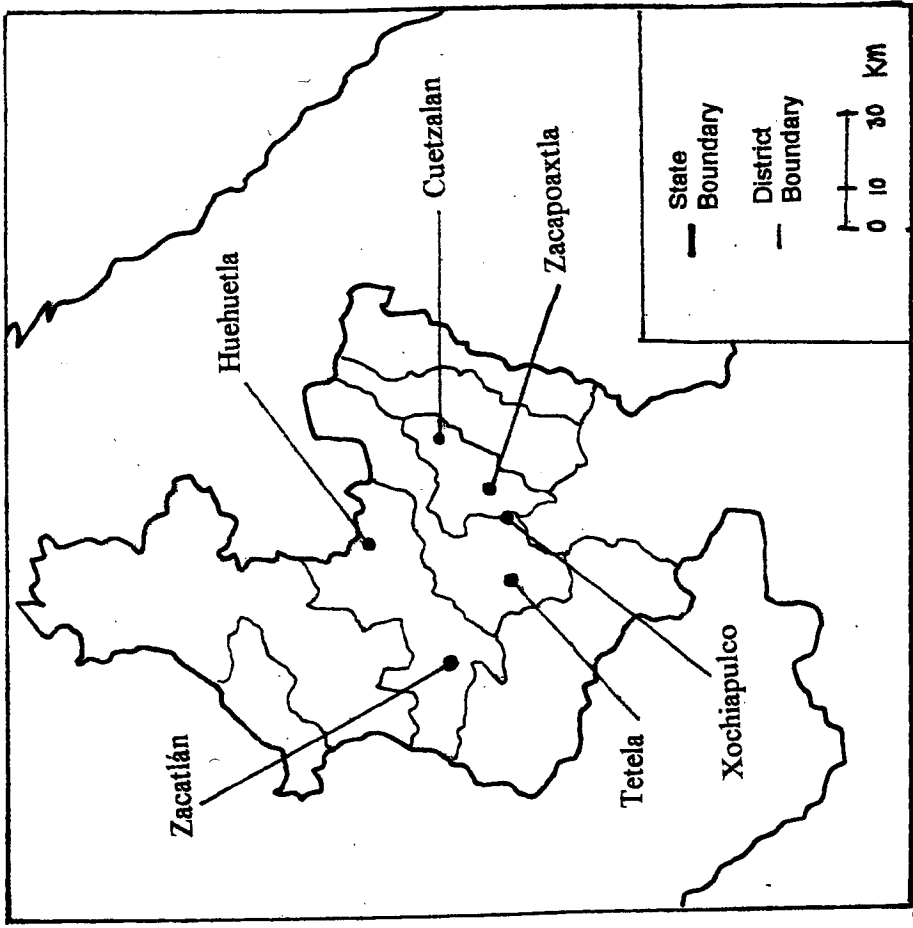
This combined documentary evidence has been complemented by oral history. When I started my research, the generation who lived through the armed conflict of the Revolution had died out. Except for two people born ca. 1920 who attended school in the late 1920s and early 1930s, all other interviewees were descendants of the authorities, teachers and students who lived during 1875-1930. I conducted interviews during June 2001-June 2002 and May-July 2003, which provided limited but useful information. Of greater value for the period studied here was the oral history compiled in San Miguel Tzinacapan during the 1980s and published in a bilingual Nahuat-Spanish edition. The information from these interviews and from Tzinacapan's oral history has been tested against documentary evidence for the period.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> TTOSA, *Tejuan*.

# Districts in the Sierra Norte, State of Puebla

Map of Mexico  
Location of area of study



**PART ONE**  
**THE PORFIRIATO**

## **Chapter One**

### **State-Building and Schools in the Sierra Norte de Puebla**

This chapter provides the background to politics and education in the Sierra Norte de Puebla during the Porfiriato (1876-1911). It draws upon evidence from the whole region and focuses on the municipalities of Cuetzalan and Huehuetla, which will be studied in detail in Chapters Two and Three respectively. In order to understand the nature of the political order that had been achieved by 1876, I first outline the Sierra's participation in the liberal wars of the mid-nineteenth century, and its relationship with state and federal governments. Secondly, the changes undergone in municipal and pueblo administration are considered, especially the transformation from corporate to hybrid forms of government which combined colonial and liberal practice by articulating the Indian pueblos' cargo system with offices sanctioned by the liberal legislation. This is followed by an account of the transition from Church tithes to liberal taxation, including the change from Church- and corporate-sponsored religious instruction to secular schools funded by a municipal tax.

The second half of this chapter gives an overview of educational administration showing how, despite the regime's centralising tendencies, municipal seats and even pueblos retained a great degree of autonomy in matters of public instruction. The last section, 'Naming Citizens', reflects on the liberal state's and the schools' changing terms to address the population and the problems that these changes pose to the historian. It first considers the official abolition of race categories and its slow but sure disappearance from the records of local

administration, which make it difficult for the historian to reconstruct inter-ethnic relations. Secondly, it looks at the persistence of Indian naming practices which prevent the identification of individuals by the higher levels of the administration (and to some extent by the historian), and the role of teachers, agents of a growing bureaucracy, in spreading more individualising naming practices by encouraging the use of surnames.

## I. Popular Liberalism and State-Building in the Sierra Norte de Puebla

The Sierra Norte de Puebla actively participated in the civil war between liberals and conservatives (1858-61) and the war against European intervention (1863-67). Mobilisation of *serranos* was made possible by the skilful leadership of upwardly mobile mestizos and assertive Indians who became commanders of the National Guards, and constituted the liberal Montaña party. The National Guard was remarkably successful in the recruitment of Indian peasants who were generally believed to abhor military service. The conditions of service, diametrically opposed to those of the regular federal army and its dreaded *leva* (forced recruitment), go a long way to explain this success. Members of the National Guard joined voluntarily and were exempted from taxation and public service (both of which were compulsory for adult men). They generally served locally so that its members were never too far from their cultivation plots or families. Finally, Indian soldiers could elect commanders from among their own. Because National Guard commanders promised that soldiers would be rewarded with land grants, recruitment was particularly successful in the southern municipalities of the Sierra where land was scarce.<sup>1</sup>

For those who rejected military service, there was the choice to pay a mustering-out tax (*contribución de rebajados*). During the mid-century wars, collection of *rebajados* was an effective and efficient means to sustain the long military campaigns that came to an end with the liberal triumph in 1867. The

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<sup>1</sup> On National Guards in the Sierra Norte de Puebla see Guy Thomson, 'Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism'. For a general overview, Alicia Hernández, 'La guardia nacional y la movilización política de los pueblos' in Jaime E. Rodríguez, *Patterns of Contention in Mexican History* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1992).

municipalities of the centre and north Sierra, with a semi-tropical climate and more fertile lands, often provided revenue and food supplies rather than soldiers for the liberal cause. The significance of liberal taxation derived from the changes it introduced in the long term. Whereas colonial legislation placed onerous tributes exclusively on Indians, liberal taxation would be universally applied to all inhabitants of the new republic, regardless of race. The *contribución de rebajados* functioned 'as a charter of liberal citizenship and equality before the law' as Indian municipal authorities were entitled for the first time to tax non-Indians who lived in the municipality.<sup>2</sup>

Taxation, however, was not only about formal equality and citizenship but also about centralisation of power. In 1870, as part of governor Romero Vargas's centralising measures, *jefes políticos* lost control of the *rebajados* tax to the state government. The municipalities would only enjoy 20 per cent of the revenue collected from *rebajados*. In 1875, auguring times of peace, *rebajados* was replaced by the *contribución civil*.<sup>3</sup> No major changes were introduced with the shift from *rebajados* to *civil*.<sup>4</sup> At the local level, the second most important tax was the Chicontepec tax.<sup>5</sup> Chicontepec replaced the Church's *dominica* which

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<sup>2</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, p. 10 and for the revealing case of Zautla, as regards taxation, see pp. 226-229.

<sup>3</sup> ACEP, Decretos de 1875, foja 27, 'Ley de 10 de abril que crea la contribución civil', Puebla 10 April 1875; foja 28, 'Reglamento para la imposición y cobro de la contribución civil, creada por la ley de 10 abril de 1875', Puebla 10 April 1875.

<sup>4</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, p. 11, 186. AMC, box 5, Presidencia, Miguel Arriaga to Presidente Cuetzalan, Zacapoaxtla 12 July 1875 and Presidente Cuetzalan to Yancuitalpan, 3 Aug 1875. ASMTz, box 14, Presidencia, doc. 100, Miguel Castillo to Presidente Tzinacapan, Zacapoaxtla 12 July 1873. AMH, box 2, Presidencia, Juan Uribe to Alcalde Huehuetla, Olintla 22 Dec 1876.

<sup>5</sup> The denomination 'Chicontepec' came from the first municipality (then in Puebla, and later part of the state of Veracruz) which petitioned the government to establish a tax to cover municipal



paid for religious services including the teaching of the catechism. Chicontepec was a serious effort to fund elementary schools and the single most important measure to implement the liberals' ambitious legislation on universal secular education.<sup>6</sup>

Thus the Montaña's liberal project was built upon both the National Guard / tax dyad and a network of secular schools sustained by the Chicontepec tax. The population of the Sierra were bound to the project of the emerging liberal state as soldiers and taxpayers.<sup>7</sup> The precise role of schools in this process of state-building will be examined in the coming chapters.

In 1867, after the liberal triumph and the restoration of the Republic, President Benito Juárez did not back the military leaders of the Montaña for the Puebla state government. He preferred the educated liberals of the southern Llanura party, Rafael García (1867-1869) and Ignacio Romero Vargas (1869-1876), and actively prevented Montaña leader Juan Nepomuceno Méndez from running for state elections. In line with changes promoted by Juárez at the federal level, Romero Vargas reformed the state constitution in December 1870 to

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expenses in 1824. This was made extensive to the rest of the state in 1825, and it became a tax exclusively for public instruction since 1848. *Ley de 30 de Julio de 1825 que estableció la Contribución de Chicontepec* (Puebla: Imprenta del Gobierno, 1827). Salvador Cruz, *Historia de la Educación en Puebla, 1790-1982*, vol 1. (Puebla: BUAP, 1995), p. 206.

<sup>6</sup> More research on nineteenth century taxation is needed, especially at the local level. Antonio Escobar remarks that we know little about the transition from colonial tribute to liberal taxation in Indian villages. Antonio Escobar, 'Los Ayuntamientos y los pueblos indios en la Sierra Huasteca: Conflictos entre nuevos y viejos actores, 1812-1840' in Leticia Reina (ed.) *La reindianización de América, siglo XIX*. (México: Siglo XXI, 1997), p. 312. For the Sierra Norte de Puebla, Guy Thomson emphasises the changes introduced with liberal taxation, looking at its significance for the population of the Sierra. Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism. For resistance to taxation, especially tax on land property (predial) in Porfirian Tlaxcala*, see Ricardo Rendón Garcini, *El Prosperato. Tlaxcala de 1885 a 1911*. (México: UIA-Siglo XXI, 1993).

<sup>7</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, ch. 1.

provide for a more centralised government, including the transfer of the *rebajado* tax from the *jefatura política* (district level administration) to state government.<sup>8</sup>

The disappointment of the Montaña liberals, who felt deceived by the governments of Juárez (1867-72) and Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada (1872-76), and saw local political autonomy challenged by Romero Vargas' reforms, translated into support for an old companion at arms, and now the prime enemy of Juárez: General Porfirio Díaz. Predictably, the Montaña joined the 1871 revolt of La Noria led by Díaz. The Sierra population provided men, cash and food. The revolt of La Noria was repressed but discontent remained. The state governor's measures to weaken the Montaña, disarming supporters and overall eroding the autonomy of municipalities, would result in widespread support for 1876 Díaz's new challenge to government: the revolution of Tuxtepec. The triumph of Tuxtepec finally took the Montaña to state government (Juan C. Bonilla, 1877-1880, and Juan N. Méndez, 1880-1884).<sup>9</sup>

Under governor Juan C. Bonilla, the state constitution of 1861, which provided greater political autonomy to municipalities and districts, was restored. Direct municipal and district elections were reintroduced as well as the right of the mayors of district capitals to petition for legislative changes. Yet, only three years after the Montaña took the state government, some decentralising measures were being reversed. Juan N. Méndez revoked direct local elections in 1880, municipal councils would be chosen through a two-tier system and *jefes políticos* would once more be appointed by the state executive. Centralisation occurred at a greater pace after Méndez's term expired. In a context of rivalry between different liberal factions in Puebla, and increasing authoritarianism from federal government,

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<sup>8</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, ch. 8.

Porfirio Díaz decided to support an outsider to Puebla politics for the governorship. Díaz's choice, Rosendo Márquez, governed during 1885-1892. He was succeeded by another of Díaz's appointees, Mucio Martínez, a General from Nuevo León who gained a reputation not only as a centralist subservient to Díaz but a despotic and corrupt governor. He remained as head of the Puebla executive until 1911.<sup>10</sup> But how did the municipal seats and villages of the Sierra experienced these changes? And what did they mean in terms of local government and the provision of secular education?

### Municipal and Pueblo Government.

The transition from the colonial corporate pueblo to the liberal *Ayuntamiento* (town council) and to a more open economy was a protracted and conflictive process for villages and towns in the Sierra. The judicious stance of Montaña leaders meant that support for liberalism was greater than resistance, but except in the peculiar case of the municipality of Xochiapulco where liberalism was embraced wholesale, the transition brought about a hybrid organisation where the old forms of government, sometimes deeply transformed but still not entirely liberal, played a decisive role.<sup>11</sup> Throughout the civil and patriotic wars, as well as

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<sup>9</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, ch. 11-13.

<sup>10</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, p. 241. On Díaz's increasing intervention in state governments and repression under Mucio Martínez in Puebla see François-Xavier Guerra, *México: del Antiguo Regimen a la Revolución* (México: FCE, 1995), vol. I., pp. 49-50. Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution*, vol. I., pp. 17, 32, 75.

<sup>11</sup> Antonio Escobar, 'Los Ayuntamientos y los pueblos indios'. On Xochiapulco, see Guy Thomson, ' "La republique au village" in Spain and Mexico' in Hans-Joachim König and Marianne Wiesebron (eds.), *Nation Building in Nineteenth Century Latin America. Dilemmas and Conflicts* (Leiden: Research School CNWS, 1998), pp. 55-56.

during the revolt of La Noria and the revolution of Tuxtepec, the Montaña leaders obtained the support of serranos through a careful balance between exactions (taxation, service in the National Guard, war supplies) and the protection and defence of a number of villagers' old and new rights. This relationship entailed a pragmatic implementation of liberal policy, especially when it posed a clear threat to the pueblos' organisation and identity. Hence the adjective 'popular' to refer to the liberalism that took effect in the Sierra.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the growing migration of non-Indians to former *pueblos de indios* put great pressure on former common lands that became a commodity open for sale and purchase. However, the geographic conditions of the Sierra discouraged the formation of large estates, while villagers' resistance further prevented the concentration of property. Even the biggest properties in the Sierra Norte were small compared to the *haciendas* in the centre of Puebla. Nevertheless, Indian residents, who had lived in the region 'from time immemorial', found the recent settlers' advances on their land unjust.<sup>12</sup> The encroachment on Indian land sparked a rebellion in Cuetzalan led by Francisco Agustín Dieguillo, a Nahuatl National Guard commander and ally of the Montaña. Although the rebels were eventually defeated, the Nahuas managed to curb the non-Indians' land ambitions in Cuetzalan, securing their own share of land for subsistence agriculture.<sup>13</sup> In pueblos where non-Indian immigration came late, such as Huehuetla, disentailment started as late as the 1890s. Non-Indians benefited most and Totonacs subsequently protested and many refused to abandon

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<sup>12</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Montaña and Llanura in the Politics of Central Mexico: The Case of Puebla, 1820-1920' in Wil Pansters and Arij Ouweneel (eds.), *Region, State, and Capitalism in Mexico: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Amsterdam: CEDLA, 1989).

<sup>13</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian Conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan', pp. 252-53.

the formerly communal land. The greatest tension focused on land disputes between one ambitious and unscrupulous non-Indian family, on the one hand, and both Totonacs and non-Indians on the other, and no rebellion took place in Huehuetla. In fact, when the revolution broke out, it was the landed *cacique* who rebelled, trying to depose a council (composed of Indians and non-Indians) which had restricted his ambitions.<sup>14</sup> When further subdivision of land occurred in the 1910s and 1920s, both wealthy Totonacs and non-Indians benefited.<sup>15</sup>

The pueblos also felt threatened by growing non-Indian commercial networks. These traders enjoyed an advantageous position as the most important buyers of Indian-grown products. Their increasing control of commerce fed political ambitions that further threatened the Indian world. Municipal headtown councils began to be penetrated by non-Indians.

In municipalities with good economic prospects, such as Cuetzalan, non-Indians replaced Indians as mayors (*alcaldes* or *presidentes municipales*).<sup>16</sup> Yet, in the case of Cuetzalan the process was reversed in the 1880s when Montaña ally Francisco Agustín Dieguillo was elected mayor. The return of a Nahua to the municipal presidency was a testament to the popular strand of the Montaña liberalism, but the fact that non-Indians returned in 1888, crushed the last of Dieguillo's attempts at rebellion in 1894, and secured the municipal presidency until our days, was a testament to both the Montaña's acceptance of non-Indian presence in the Sierra and its diminished capacity to defend Indian interests in the late Porfiriato. The pueblos of Cuetzalan retained their network of entirely Indian

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<sup>14</sup> See Chapter Three.

<sup>15</sup> See Chapter Six.

<sup>16</sup> The head of the council was still called *alcalde* in 1875-1877 documents. After 1877 practically all official documents use the term *presidente municipal*.

authorities who formed the pueblo council or *junta auxiliar* headed by the *presidente auxiliar*, but had to come to terms with the presence of non-Indian secretaries, generally appointed by the *jefe político* at the district headtown or the mayor at the municipal headtown. In pueblos with the potential to become municipal headtowns in their own right, like Huehuetla, non-Indians began to take posts as aldermen and judges as well as secretaries and eventually would occupy the municipal presidency. While Totonac authorities lost power to the new commercial and administrative elite, they remained key mediators between non-Indian settlers and the Totonac population whose contributions and support were crucial to sustaining public administration.<sup>17</sup>

Public service in the Sierra villages was a combination of colonial and liberal practices that were crystallised in what ethnohistorians and anthropologists have called the cargo system.<sup>18</sup> The cargo system was a ladder of civil and religious offices (*cargos*), which were unpaid and compulsory for all adult men. All posts were arranged according to a hierarchy of authority and service. The ladder of civil offices started from the lowly *topiles* in charge of cleaning and courier services, and which could include children, moved up to posts such as census takers and tax collectors until it reached the higher and respected offices of

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<sup>17</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 6-8, 198. Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian Conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan'. For Huehuetla see Chapter Three.

<sup>18</sup> There has been a long debate among anthropologists on whether twentieth-century Indian forms of government (the cargo system or civil-religious hierarchy crowned by the *pasados*) are directly derived from colonial practice or a result of Indian communities' adaptation to and transformation of successive legislation from Bourbon Reforms to liberal constitutionalism. The latter view, more historically sound, was put forward in J. K. Chance and W.B. Taylor, 'Cofradías and Cargos: An historical perspective on the Mesoamerican civil-religious hierarchy', *AE*, 12 (1985), pp. 1-26.

judge or mayor.<sup>19</sup> Religious posts were similarly arranged starting with *topiles* and went up to *fiscales* and *mayores*, who had great financial commitments to sponsor ceremonial life. Initially, religious and civil posts were of equal importance and men alternated between them during their lifetime (this is called an 'alternating cargo system'); those who had completed service at all levels would become elders or *pasados* and held the highest authority in the community. However, a number of changes, especially the immigration of non-Indians to Indian communities, brought about innovations in the system of alternating civil and religious posts in a single ladder or hierarchy. In some localities civil and religious office became independent from each other (called a 'parallel cargo system').<sup>20</sup>

In the pueblos subject to municipal seats, where the only non-Indian presence in the council was the secretary, civil and religious posts alternated in the same ladder.<sup>21</sup> By contrast, in the municipal seats, such as Cuetzalan, or the

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<sup>19</sup> For school-age children serving as *topiles* see AMZx, box 40, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 167. Expediente relativo al servicio, que en clase de *topiles*, prestan los vecinos de Nauzontla', Nauzontla 12 Oct 1877 and Marie Noelle Chamoux, *Indiens de la Sierra. La communauté paysanne au Mexique* (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 1981), ch. 13.

<sup>20</sup> In the nineteenth-century municipality of Apetatitlán (Tlaxcala), where non-Indians lived in the headtown, and for which there is substantial documentation, Yvette Nelen found a parallel cargo system with religious organisation separate from the civil offices of the *Ayuntamiento*. For the twentieth century, anthropologists studying the Sierra Norte de Puebla point out that the greater the presence of mestizos, the more likely it was that they would have separate ladders (parallel cargo system). Yvette Nelen, 'Local government and state formation in nineteenth-century Mexico: the case of San Pablo Apetatitlán, Tlaxcala' in Willem Assies, Gemma van der Haar and Andre Hoekema (eds.) *The Challenge of Diversity. Indigenous Peoples and Reform of the State in Latin America*. (Amsterdam: THELA Thesis, 2000). Lourdes Arizpe, *Parentesco y economía en una sociedad Nahua. Nican pehua Zacatipan*. (Mexico: INI-SEP, 1973), pp. 119 ff. Pierre Durand, *Nanacatlán. Sociedad campesina y lucha de clases en México* (Mexico: FCE, 1986), pp. 43-46.

<sup>21</sup> For evidence of the existence of a hierarchy of offices and its compulsory character in late nineteenth-century Tzinacapan, see Chapter Two, Section I. For evidence suggesting the existence of an alternating cargo system in pre-revolutionary San Miguel Tzinacapan, TTOSA, *Tejuán*, p.

pueblos which aspired to become municipalities, such as Huehuetla before 1881, the system was undergoing complex transformations as a result of increasing non-Indian participation in government.

The penetration of Cuetzalan government by non-Indians resulted in a double administration. At least since the 1860s there were two mayors, one Indian and one non-Indian. This suggests that Nahuas kept their cargo system, alternating civil and religious posts. They would fulfil all the religious posts and they would share the civil posts with non-Indians. Therefore, there would be two different, although interdependent, forms of access to government: Indians took posts according to the cargo system, while non-Indians followed the procedures of the liberal *Ayuntamiento*.<sup>22</sup> The details of the interaction between the two administrations have generally escaped the record and it is difficult to know what the distribution of power within the council was. However, after non-Indians took the municipal presidency in 1888 (and Nahuas were no longer elected to this post), the man appointed as mayor or *juez* for the Indians was probably losing influence within the council until it became a mere link between a powerful non-Indian municipal president and the Nahua population whose support was required. The same system is likely to have developed in Huehuetla, although at a later date because non-Indian immigration had only started in the mid-nineteenth century. In Cuetzalan, this immigration had started earlier, and there were non-Indian

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207. In 1969-1970, Anthropologist Lourdes Arizpe found an alternating cargo system in Zacatipan (San Andrés Tzicuilan, Cuetzalan), see note above.

<sup>22</sup> This ethnic distribution of posts and the existence of a double administration coincide with Yvette Nelen's findings for a pueblo in Tlaxcala. Yvette Nelen, 'Local government and state formation'. The case of Cuetzalan will be further discussed in Chapter Two, Section I and Chapter Five, Section I.



municipal presidents at least since the 1860s, in Huehuetla, by contrast, the municipal presidency was not occupied by a non-Indian until the 1890s.<sup>23</sup>

Let us further examine the transformations in local councils, with a focus on specifically Indian forms of government. A number of written records, together with ethnographic 'upstreaming', have led historians to believe that a village council of elders or *pasados* held the highest position within the nineteenth-century Indian pueblo's hierarchy of power. *Pasados* were the former mayors who were trusted with the most important decisions for the community, including the election of the most suitable men to occupy the highest posts. Because this was a customary arrangement, unsanctioned by liberal legislation, we know little of how the council of elders related to the civil authorities who were sanctioned by law and whose records have been preserved.<sup>24</sup> Yet the leadership of *pasados* in Cuetzalan during the agrarian rebellion of the 1860s suggests that although there was a decreasing participation of Nahuas in municipal government, Indian forms of organisation were still strong enough to oppose authorities.<sup>25</sup> Available documents for Huehuetla do not prove that *pasados* enjoyed the highest ranking in local politics but it is nonetheless clear that Totonac elders, some of whom were monolingual, consulted the pueblo's opinion and represented it before higher

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<sup>23</sup> For Huehuetla see Chapter Three, Section I and Chapter Six, Section I.

<sup>24</sup> Recently for the Sierra Norte de Puebla, Florencia Mallon relied to a great extent on twentieth-century ethnography to describe the politics within nineteenth-century Indian communities. By contrast, Yvette Nelen made more nuanced claims on the same topic, based on the nineteenth-century records of a pueblo in Tlaxcala. Nelen benefited from the existence of *cofradía* records which are not available for the Sierra Norte de Puebla. Florencia Mallon, *Peasant and Nation*, ch. 3. Yvette Nelen, 'Local government and state formation'.

<sup>25</sup> For the role of *pasados* in the nineteenth-century agrarian conflict, Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan', pp. 232-35. For their role in twentieth-century Cuetzalan see Hugo G. Nutini and Barry L. Isaac, *Los pueblos de habla náhuatl* (Mexico: SEP-INI, 1974), p. 169.

instances.<sup>26</sup> As late as 1878, there is evidence of the participation and consultation of *pasados* in Huehuetla's council meetings, with the aid of mestizo interpreters who translated Totonac and Spanish. In one of them, council members and *pasados* discussed what to do in order to provide the church with needed ornaments and implements.<sup>27</sup> But their intervention was not limited to religious issues. Later in the same year, when the council had to raise funds to build a new council hall and jail, the mayor consulted *pasados*. They unanimously supported the construction of the new building and, crucially, they reported that the population consented to it, and was ready to contribute with both cash and labour to transport materials to the building site as was customary. *Pasados* were therefore a key link between local administration and the Indian population. Once the elders had informed of the consent of the population, the mayor's proposal

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<sup>26</sup> By the late twentieth century Indian elders had lost ground to young and educated leaders but an upsurge of Indian self-reflection on customs and traditions has brought a revival of Councils of Elders. In San Miguel Tzinacapan (Cuetzalan), when active, they have played a role as advisors and guardians of good government and the preservation of customs but no longer appoint presidents as they used to. They have played a greater role in 1990s Huehuetla when a Totonac organisation (Organización Independiente Totonaca, OIT) allied with a registered political party (Partido de la Revolución Democrática, PRD), won the municipal elections for three consecutive times (ruling for a total of nine years). For Tzinacapan see Comisión Takachihualis 'Investigación de la Ley Indígena' in V.H. Valencia and L. Mellado (eds.) *Cuetzalan. Memoria e Identidad* (México: INAH, 2002). On the collaboration of Huehuetla's Council of Elders with municipal authorities, see J. J. Torres, *Las luchas indias por el poder local: Los casos de Huehuetla, Sierra Norte de Puebla y Rancho Nuevo de la Democracia, Guerrero* (Unpublished Master's dissertation, CIESAS, Mexico, 2000), pp. 122-124. The importance of the role of the council of elders is emphasised in a 1999 document by the OIT in N. L. Ramírez, *Las ONGs indígenas, un actor clave en la defensa de la identidad en los municipios de Cuetzalan y Huehuetla* (MA dissertation, BUAP, Puebla, 2002), appendix, p. 5. See also *Democracia Indígena*, script for the documentary directed by Bruce P. Lane in Huehuetla, p. 4. <<http://www.docfilm.com/democracia.htm>> (26 July 2004). For the Sierra more generally see T. Valdivia (ed.) *Encuentro de autoridades tradicionales en Alaquines, Huauchinango. Cuadernos de Antropología Jurídica, nu. 3*. (México: INI, 1994), especially pp. 27-28.

was presented at the council meeting, following the formal procedure, and once it was accepted by all members of the council, letters were sent to the *jefe político* and state government requesting approval.<sup>28</sup> The elders were also informed of the developments related to boundary disputes and the appointments made by the *jefe político* to solve them. And, at least formally, they were asked for their approval.<sup>29</sup> Such consultation suggests customary and legal authorities collaborated in a manner similar to that found for other Indian communities such as late nineteenth-century Tlaxcala and early twentieth-century Chiapas.<sup>30</sup>

Whereas the details of the pueblos' internal administration and the intricacies of the cargo system have generally escaped record, there is consistent evidence for Zacapoaxtla and Cuetzalan that office-holding, whether civil or religious, was compulsory. When an Indian man received an appointment, he was expected to feel honoured and accept it. Taking office committed men to a service of varying demands; the lower the post the lower the demands but also the lower the prestige. In certain circumstances, even a post at the bottom end of the hierarchy could become burdensome as it took the officeholder's time from work in the family's *milpa* (subsistence maize plots). However, office was seen as a man's duty and an inescapable trait of pueblo life. A report from Zacapoaxtla's town councillors observed of civil posts in 1872:

When it comes to council offices, an indigenous man will never reject a post nor resign from office. Not even if he sees how he goes bankrupt for lack of time to attend his own business. Instead he is convinced that it is his duty to fulfil such public service and

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<sup>27</sup> AMH, box 2, Libro de sesiones, entry for 6 Aug 1878.

<sup>28</sup> AMH, box 2, Libro de sesiones, entry for 16 Oct 1878.

<sup>29</sup> AMH, box 2, Borrador de Oficios para 1876, entry for 15 June 1876.

<sup>30</sup> For Tlaxcala see Yvette Nelen, 'Local government and state formation', p. 161. For Chamula, Chiapas, see J. Rus and R. Wasserstrom 'Civil-religious hierarchies in central Chiapas: a critical perspective', *American Ethnologist* (7): 3. 1980, p. 473.

when he is appointed, he simply says: *ni xihuitequeiti, ten Dios quinequis*, "I shall follow the Lord's will and work in public service for a year". However, there are limits to his service. He will not accept a loss of rank when appointed for an office. He will commence his service as minister of the rod and follow as justice of the peace or mayor. Having reached the latter rank he will become *pasado*, a position of great respect. In their customs for municipal service there are no variations and they do not wish to introduce any modifications. Any reform is, in their view, a relaxation of public administration, especially when it comes to the judiciary, which is held in the highest regard.<sup>31</sup>

Additionally, adult men were obliged to provide *faenas*, a weekly day of labour towards public works such as road repairs. Villagers were called to *faenas* in their own pueblo but also by municipal and district authorities. When calls came from outside, rather than within the villages, resistance was more common. The practice of *faenas* is of particular interest because it had been forbidden by the 1857 Constitution. Montaña liberals attempted to abolish this custom to an extent but *faenas* prevailed for reasons that will be explored later.<sup>32</sup>

## Taxation

Increased demand for land, the sale of corporate property, the encroachment of non-Indians over administration and the existence of compulsory public service were not the only pressures upon Indian towns. Taxation included personal contributions or head taxes for state as well as municipal government, various taxes on production and commerce, and additional taxes on municipal income to

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<sup>31</sup> 'Noticia Geográfica y estadística del Estado de Puebla formadas por las comisiones de los distritos, según lo dispuesto por el superior gobierno del mismo. Zacapoaxtla, Octubre 20 de 1872, Francisco Lobato y Huerta, Juan N. Limón, Remigio Varela, José María Castillo y Molina, Juan N. Luna' in Francisco Javier Arriaga, *Expediente Geográfico-Estadístico* (México: Imprenta del Gobierno en Palacio, 1873), pp. 29-30.

<sup>32</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 10-14, 206, 217.

feed the federal treasury (*contribución federal*).<sup>33</sup> As was mentioned above, the two single most important taxes at the local level were *rebajados* and Chicontepec. Both were head taxes and therefore applied to all males aged 18 to 60. But in contrast to the centralisation of *rebajados*, Chicontepec remained a prerogative of the municipalities. Even when in 1889 governor Rosendo Márquez decided to centralise public education funding for Puebla City, transferring it from the *Ayuntamiento* to the state government, no changes occurred in the *Ayuntamientos* outside the capital city.<sup>34</sup> The significance of the local control of Chicontepec will be discussed below, after considering the *rebajados* tax as well as Church exactions.

The *rebajados* tax was centralised by the state government in 1870. In 1873 a decree ceded 20 per cent of *rebajados*'s proceeds to the municipalities, of which 12 per cent would contribute to school funding and 8 per cent to public works.<sup>35</sup> The *rebajados* tax became *contribución civil* in 1875, which varied between \$0.125 and \$3 per month according to income.<sup>36</sup> Thus the *civil* introduced, if not a progressive system, at least a graduation of the fee according to taxpayer's wealth. However, when the *contribución civil* changed to *contribución personal* in 1877, a flat rate of \$0.125 was introduced. This surely

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<sup>33</sup> For *contribución federal*, see Marcello Carmagnani, 'El liberalismo, los impuestos internos y el estado federal mexicano, 1857-1911', *HM*, 38:3 (1989), pp. 471-496. On taxes to commerce, see Luis Aboites, 'Alcabalas Posporfirianas', *HM*, 51:2 (2001), pp. 363-393.

<sup>34</sup> 'Decreto sobre el pago de la Instrucción Primaria en la Capital', *POEP*, Decretos 1889, foja 119, Puebla 31 Aug 1889.

<sup>35</sup> ASMTz, box 14, 'Decretos. Año de 1873', decree no. 58, 20 May 1873. Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 186 and 222.

<sup>36</sup> Annual incomes under \$100 paid the minimum \$0.125, and the rate increased \$0.125 for every \$100 in income. ACEP, Decretos de 1875, foja 27, 'Ley de 10 de abril que crea la contribución civil', Puebla 10 April 1875; foja 28, 'Reglamento para la imposición y cobro de la contribución civil, creada por la ley de 10 abril de 1875' Puebla 10 April 1875.

facilitated collection but even if it did not harm the poorer in comparison to the 1875 rate, it favoured the wealthier. From the point of view of the taxpayer the advantage of the 1877 law was that it exempted more people. If exemptions are any indication of what activities and professions the liberal government and the emerging liberal state valued, then defence and security, together with public instruction were crucial. Soldiers and school teachers, by virtue of their professions, already contributed sufficiently to the nation. Together with the 1875 exemptions for the military, students and school teachers, the 1877 law exempted those who occupied unpaid public posts in the municipalities as well as the disabled. The list of exemptions increased yet again in 1888 to include a number of public employees and the members of the municipal philharmonic corps.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, in the 1880s, the proportion dedicated to education increased from the 12 per cent of 1873 to 20 per cent.<sup>38</sup>

Following liberal reform legislation, Church exactions should have disappeared so that villagers faced only the demands of the liberal state. In practice, however, and to different extents in different places, some payments and services to the Church continued.<sup>39</sup> Evidence from Huehuetla illustrates the processes and negotiations involved in the transition from Church to liberal state exactions, as well as their considerable overlap. A few months after the liberal

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<sup>37</sup> 'Ley que establece la contribución personal', *POEP*, 1876-77 Laws, foja 59, Puebla 21 June 1877. 'Ley para el cobro de la contribución personal establecida el 21 de junio de 1877, Puebla 12 April 1888 and Reglamento que para el cobro de la contribución personal formó el Gobernador del Estado, Puebla 31 March 1888, *POEP*, 1888 Laws, Puebla 12 and 14 April 1888.

<sup>38</sup> ACEP, Colección de Decretos para 1882, 'Decreto para el cobro de la contribución personal', Puebla 5 April 1882; Colección de Decretos para 1886, foja 167, 'Decreto para el cobro de la contribución personal', Puebla 21 Oct 1886.

triumph in May 1867, when Montaña leader Juan Crisóstomo Bonilla became *jefe político and Comandante Militar* of Zacatlán, he gave a clear set of instructions to parish priests.<sup>40</sup> They would meet at municipal seats with the authorities and most prominent people of their parishes, including *pasados* from subject pueblos, who would be consulted on whether 'it is everyone's will that the priest remains in town and that he receives the customary services'.<sup>41</sup> The resolution would be registered in written form. No records were found of such meetings but subsequent events suggest there was no definitive agreement. It is clear that Church tithes and personal services to the priest were not abolished altogether but neither was liberal legislation entirely ignored. Customary practices that greatly benefited the Church were open to question, discussion and negotiation.

Some Indian pueblos, including Huehuetla, took the opportunity to transform relations with the Church. In the process, the liberal state benefited from greater control over the population's resources. The implementation of the Reform Laws that abolished Church taxes and replaced them with the state taxation was relatively successful. The careful negotiation of the Montaña to implement liberal legislation built upon strong peasant motivations to reduce contributions to the Church.<sup>42</sup> Many Indian pueblos saw Church exactions as a burden.<sup>43</sup> Two quotations below will serve as an example of how the assertive Totonac mayors of

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<sup>39</sup> As late as 1867 Cuetzalan's mayor requested Tzinacapan that *dominicas* be paid. ASMTz, box 8, file Presidencia, letters dated 4 Dec 1867 and 4 January 1868 from Cuetzalan Mayor Juan B. Urcid.

<sup>40</sup> AMH, box 1, Jefatura Política y Comandancia Militar to Huehuetla, Zacatlán 31 July 1867.

<sup>41</sup> The fact that Montaña leaders and district authorities reckoned with the authority of elders when it came to the implementation of Reform Laws is further proof that *pasados* served as representatives of the pueblos. AMH, box 1, Miguel Ramos to Huehuetla, Olintla 19 August 1867.

<sup>42</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 1-23.

Huehuetla sought to reduce parish dues, petitioning *jefes políticos* for the implementation of Reform laws.

In February 1875 the mayor of Huehuetla (he was still called *alcalde* rather than *presidente*), addressed a letter to the parish priest to reduce his services. In contrast to similar letters where they asked for reduction or delay of civil payments, this was firm and far from apologising:

Given that we are overburdened with payments, and suffering scarcity of corn, may I inform you that we do not wish to celebrate a service tomorrow since we have no means to pay for it. And I must warn you that you should come only once a fortnight for the *dominica*, and under the condition that you will bring your own servant to assist your horse and your meals.<sup>44</sup>

When later the same year the municipal headtown of Olintla (Huehuetla was still a *pueblo sujeto* to Olintla) requested customary services for a religious festival, Huehuetla's mayor responded with a revealing protest to the *jefe político*. He described the demands for supplies and manpower for the religious festivity as an injurious custom, showing a deep-seated and vocal anticlericalism which favoured application of the Reform laws:

The parish priest takes customary services as though they were a law because his predecessors forced us to provide them. Are his complaints just? It is clear to us that these gentlemen have always tried to abuse their position; they have never shown any consideration toward us, and they are at their worst when it comes to money matters.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> For the Sierra see Guy Thomson, 'Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism', pp. 63-64. For eighteenth-century Western Mexico see William Taylor, *Magistrates of the Sacred*, p. 247.

<sup>44</sup> AMH, box 2, Borrador de Oficios, Francisco García to priest, 27 Feb 1875.

<sup>45</sup> AMH, box 2, Borrador de Oficios, Bonifacio Gaona to Jefe Político, 7 Aug 1875. For further evidence of differences between Totonac authorities (including holders of religious cargos) and the parish priest, see AMH, box 2, José Antonio Luna to Huehuetla 13 Aug 1876 and Borrador de Oficios 1876, Bonifacio Gaona to Jefe Político, 13 Aug 1876.



Huehuetla's mayor must have been used to Church-inclined authorities. Rather than claiming to abide by the law, he insisted that, in reducing religious services, they were not mere opportunists 'taking advantage' of the Reform Laws, but simply responding to economic constraints.<sup>46</sup> However, it would not have escaped the *jefe político*, whether he was a more or less committed liberal, that Huehuetla needed to reduce or stop parish dues in order to face the growing demands from the liberal state.<sup>47</sup>

### The Chicontepec Tax

The implementation of Reform laws, favoured by hard-pressed and anticlerical Totonacs, must have harmed the Church's provision of education. Before Independence, village schools where catechism, reading and writing were taught, had been sustained with the *dominica* (which funded Church services) and, increasingly, as the *dominica* failed to cover all of the teacher's salary, schools were sustained by the town's corporate funds or *cajas de comunidad* (comprising the proceeds from the rent of communal land and the harvest of communal plots). Teachers were appointed by the parish priest or the mayor, or by agreement between the two.<sup>48</sup> In post-Independence Mexico, the combined resources of the *dominica* and corporate funds to pay for schools would be replaced by a single,

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<sup>46</sup> AMH, box 2, Borrador de Oficios, Bonifacio Gaona to Jefe Político, 7 Aug 1875.

<sup>47</sup> For Huehuetla's success in stopping fees for religious marriage, in order to pay the civil registry instead, see AMH, box 2, Presidencia, Borrador de Oficios, Bonifacio Gaona to Jefe Político, 6 Aug 1875; Manuel Antonio (civil registrar) to Alcalde Huehuetla, Olintla 20 April 1876.

<sup>48</sup> On *cajas de comunidad* see Dorothy Tanck, *Pueblos de indios y educación en México colonial, 1750-1821* (Mexico: Colegio de México, 1999), pp. 56-74, 83-85; on school funding in Puebla

municipal tax called *contribución de Chicontepec*. Although initially decreed in 1825 to cover municipal expenses more generally, from 1848 Chicontepec would be dedicated exclusively to the funding of public instruction. By the 1870s all pueblos had a secular school, whose teachers were appointed by civil authorities, and funded by the Chicontepec tax paid by all adult males irrespective of race. Huehuetla's reluctance to continue paying Church dues and their punctual payment of the Chicontepec tax during the Porfiriato suggests that only secular schools were being sustained by the population. This was no minor victory for the Montaña and the emerging liberal state.

Throughout the Porfiriato the collection of the Chicontepec tax was based on the 1825 law which simply stated that municipalities were entitled to collect a head tax for their expenses. Men considered as *jornaleros* (without property) would contribute half a real and the wealthier would pay 'according to their greater means and in proportion to the half a real paid by *jornaleros*'.<sup>49</sup> A number of reforms occurred regarding details of enforcement, collection and fines, generally in line with changes in the other head tax, the *contribución personal*.<sup>50</sup> In contrast to the state-controlled *contribución personal*, in the case of Chicontepec each municipality decided the fees that would be charged and sent its proposal to the state government, via the *jefatura política*.<sup>51</sup> As in the original

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(including the Sierra towns of Tetela, Zacapoaxtla and Zacatlán) before Independence see pp. 194-205, 262-271.

<sup>49</sup> *Decreto que concede la contribución que solicitó el Ayuntamiento de Chicontepec*, Puebla 30 July 1824 (Puebla: Imprenta del Gobierno, 1827). *Ley de 30 de Julio de 1825*.

<sup>50</sup> 'Decreto sobre el cobro de la contribución llamada de Chicontepec', *POEP*, Decretos 1889, foja 13, Puebla 18 Jan 1889.

<sup>51</sup> 'Decreto sobre los tesoros municipales de los Ayuntamientos de Xochitlán y Cuetzalan', *POEP*, Leyes 1888, foja 66, Puebla 26 July 1888. 'Decreto que adiciona el plan de arbitrios de Zacatlán', *POEP*, Decretos 1889, foja 80, Puebla 19 July 1889.

1825 decree, Chicontepec retained the graduation of fees according to income. The calculation of income and fees lay in a local committee (*junta calificadora*) appointed by the municipal government. However, local governments sometimes simplified the process by imposing a flat rate. In 1880s Cuetzalan, the monthly Chicontepec fee varied between \$0.062 and \$0.25, with most of the population paying between \$0.12 and \$0.18.<sup>52</sup> In 1910s Huehuetla, and despite a decree which specified that Chicontepec would vary between \$0.15 and \$0.50, a flat rate of \$0.27, and later \$0.30, was imposed.<sup>53</sup>

Notably, whether it was perceived as a more or less just impost by the population, throughout the Porfiriato in Cuetzalan and Huehuetla, the Chicontepec tax was generally collected punctually and the public instruction funds had no deficit.<sup>54</sup>

### A Popular Liberal State

The state that Montaña leaders and Indian pueblos were building in the Sierra Norte de Puebla was not being grounded on the rule of law but on the constant

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<sup>52</sup> AMC, box 9, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 104. Formación de Presupuestos', Cuetzalan 29 Nov 1879; box 31, Tesorería, 'Lista de Contribuyentes de Chicontepec', Cuetzalan 1889.

<sup>53</sup> AMH, box 14, Presidencia, 'Decreto del los arbitrios que formarán el tesoro municipal del Ayuntamiento de Huehuetla, Huehuetla 1910; box 37, Presidencia, Libro de Acuerdos de 1916, entries for 18 Dec 1915 and 21 Nov 1916.

<sup>54</sup> See, for instance, AMH, box 10, Tesorería, 'Noticia pormenorizada de los ingresos y egresos habidos en esta oficina desde el 1 de enero a 31 de diciembre del presente año', Huehuetla 31 Dec 1882; box 11, Tesorería, 'Exp. no. 12 formado de los estados de corte de caja de ingresos y egresos por los meses de Septiembre a Diciembre de 1886', Huehuetla 31 Dec 1886; AMC, box 86, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 37. Estados de movimiento mensual de fondos escolares, Jan-Dec 1894; AMZx, box 12-E, 'Exp. no. 3. Hacienda. Expediente de cortes de caja municipales y boleta

negotiation, case by case, of liberal legislation, including Reform laws. Such legislation, even if not universally and strictly implemented, could always be deployed to resist specific cases of excessive Church exactions whenever pueblos felt the need to do so. The dispute in 1875 Huehuetla suggests that Reform Laws could become a tool for the pueblos to resist municipal presidents through complaints to the *jefatura política*, whenever the municipal president supported the parish priest. Thus religious customs and clerical interests were checked by economic constraints, anticlerical sentiment and Reform Laws. More specifically, Church-oriented municipal authorities demanding resources were checked by overburdened, assertive pueblos with support of the *jefaturas políticas*, which, in the Sierra Norte de Puebla, were mostly liberal and often fiercely anticlerical. Totonac Huehuetecos welcomed the inroads of the Montaña liberals in regional politics insofar as they set them free from the excesses of religious rule, while respecting pueblo authorities and discussing the implementation of policies with *pasados*. In the process, pueblos redirected resources to regional liberal leaders and, ultimately, to the emerging secular state, to the detriment of the Church. Gradually, and grudgingly, the Indian authorities of the Sierra pueblos surrendered autonomy to the new powers. The clearest sign of such concessions was the presence of non-Indian secretaries appointed by the *jefe político* or the municipal president, and of non-Indian aldermen who found their way into the town council and gained increasing control of pueblo politics. The power of traditional authorities must have been severely undermined by the encroaching presence of these non-Indian caciques who became the necessary link with higher administrative levels.

Council secretaries were key figures because of their official and unofficial roles in the pueblo. They possessed scarce skills such as literacy and book-keeping, often aided by bilingualism, and held a non-elected post in which they could remain indefinitely. As they wrote the pueblo's official correspondence, penned the council minutes, and sometimes were *de facto* treasurers, they became key mediators between the Indian population in the subject villages and the non-Indian traders and administrators in the headtowns. Secretaries thus turned into powerful figures of local politics, providing municipal presidents and *jefes políticos* with an effective network of control. This system developed in the nineteenth century and was successfully used by the Montaña as the key governing link at the pueblo level.<sup>55</sup> Together with the post of secretary, positions as schoolteacher, auxiliary to the judge (a secretary or scribe for the administration of justice) and treasurer were attractive to non-Indian men who possessed the necessary skills, as they were the only salaried jobs in the administration. Treasurers did not have a salary but received a percentage of the amount collected from taxes and, for the unscrupulous, the post offered greater opportunities of enrichment through embezzlement.<sup>56</sup>

Awareness of the village secretary's power was expressed eloquently in a complaint from past officeholders in the pueblo of San Andrés Tzicuilan (Cuetzalan), against former secretary Modesto Galicia.<sup>57</sup> Signs of discontent with

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tesorerías municipales de este distrito', Zacapoaxtla 13 Dec 1907.

<sup>55</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>56</sup> Specific cases will be discussed for Cuetzalan and Huchuetla in Chapters Two and Three.

<sup>57</sup> AMC, box 6, Justicia, 18 Nov 1875.

Modesto existed at least since 1875 but grievances were not expressed until 1879 when the district treasurer tried to settle a debt of \$116.50 acquired by Tzicuilan between 1873 and 1876.<sup>58</sup> In 1879, under pressure to pay off the debt, the authorities who had ruled in 1873-76 approached the new mayor of Tzicuilan for help. He tried to get the Tzicuileños to cooperate but the villagers refused and complained to the *jefe político*. Lauro Luna resolved that only Tzicuilan's authorities at the time, and not the villagers, were responsible. The former authorities finally accused Modesto Galicia, secretary at the time, of the village council debts. Their complaint, written by a scribe in Zacapoaxtla on 31 December 1879, revealed the extent to which illiterate Indian authorities were at the mercy of the non-Indian secretary:

The Secretary would take charge of the funds and it was his policy not to consult us in any matters since he benefited from the support of the municipal seat's mayor, who was, at the time, Señor Ramón Vázquez. Given our limited knowledge of the various matters of the administration, we have had the misfortune to be dependent on the secretary whom we believe should be an honest and sufficiently qualified person for the job. It is in this belief that we rely entirely on him for all matters of local government and we do not find it fair, *Ciudadano Jefe*, that only as a result of our ignorance, are we forced to pay a sum that none of us has taken.<sup>59</sup>

Additional evidence of Modesto's illegal behaviour, as well as similar criticisms of secretaries' abuses throughout the Sierra, confirm that the accusation was accurate.<sup>60</sup> Clearly, villages' ability to organise their internal affairs on the basis of

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<sup>58</sup> AMC, box 5, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 94. Contiene el nombramiento de secretario y preceptor de la junta municipal de Tzicuilan', 8 June 1875.

<sup>59</sup> AMZx, box 35, 'Exp. no. 255. Relativo a la queja que interponen varios vecinos del pueblo de Tzicuilan, en contra del alcalde municipal del mismo por exigirles el pago de \$116.50', Dec 1879.

<sup>60</sup> In the 1870s Modesto Galicia was found guilty of offences such as drunkenness, firing guns and initiating scandals in Tzinacapan (which were covered up by his brother Serapio, who was secretary in the neighbouring village of San Miguel Tzinacapan). As a punishment for beating his

a network of Indian officeholders was severely disrupted by the presence of the non-Indian secretary. Indian councillors, often illiterate and sometimes monolingual, had to trust all their correspondence, the registration of minutes and the treasury accounts to the Spanish-speaking non-Indian secretary who generally understood the Indian language. As will be seen in Chapter Two regarding the case of San Miguel Tzinacapan (Cuetzalan), different views over the secretary's role and influence in the village could cause division and factionalism affecting tax collection and school funding.<sup>61</sup>

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wife he was enlisted in the National Guard in September 1876 but deserted in October. He died in 1879. AMC, box 6, Justicia, 'Exp. no. 23. Que contiene una cuestión que tuvo lugar entre Modesto Galicia y Vicente Mora', 21 Sep 1875 and docs. dated 21 and 22-28 Sep 1875. AMC, box 7, 'Exp. no. 51. Multa pagada por Blas Mora y Manuel Castro por fianza a favor de Modesto Galicia', 14 Sep 1876 and doc. dated Cuetzalan 31 Oct 1876.

<sup>61</sup> On the role of secretaries in the Sierra, see Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 6-23; *El Progreso de Zacatlán*, 15 Oct 1880, 15 May 1881 and 1 Nov 1882; Moisés Sáenz, *Escuelas federales en la Sierra de Puebla. Informe sobre la visita a las escuelas federales en la Sierra de Puebla* (Mexico: Talleres Gráficos de la Nación, 1927), pp. 81-83.

## II. Public Instruction and Local Autonomy

The growing power of non-Indians in the administration of the Sierra municipalities was aided by the imposition of Spanish as the only language of the administration. At the same time that Spanish was imposed, and indigenous languages stopped being used for official purposes, the liberal state sought to replace the Church's doctrine schools with secular schools. In principle the schools of the liberal state could teach Spanish to Indians so that they could engage in the administration of their pueblos. However, in practice, schools often failed to do so. But before exploring this question in Chapters Two and Three, it is first necessary to outline in the rest of this chapter the organisation of public instruction at the state and local level.

The Puebla state government exercised an administrative and pedagogical tutelage over public instruction which was put firmly in place with the educational law of 1879, passed by the government of Montaña leader Juan C. Bonilla. The state executive would issue school programmes and oversee its implementation through a network of inspectors accountable to the executive and through boards of school inspection (*consejos de vigilancia*) in each of the districts in the state. Bonilla additionally arranged for the opening of Female and Male Teacher Training Colleges, inaugurated in September 1879 and January 1880, respectively. Yet, once the state had provided school programmes, teacher training and inspection, the funding and everyday administration of schools was in the hands



of municipal authorities.<sup>62</sup> Although the governments of Rosendo Márquez (1885-1892) and Mucio Martínez (1892-1911) resulted in political centralisation to the detriment of municipal power, there were no important changes in education.<sup>63</sup> Perhaps seeking greater control over school administration, the educational law of 1893 ruled that the *jefe político* would be president of the district board of school inspection. However, this measure did not result in greater control from the Puebla executive. Such control was limited to the visit of the state school inspector two or three times a year. Administration of the schools, and, crucially, their funding, remained a municipal duty.<sup>64</sup>

### The Local Control of the Chicontepec Tax

The key to sustaining schools was the Chicontepec Tax. Compared to the national tendency to centralise educational administration, it is notable that the Sierra municipalities continued to collect and administrate Chicontepec throughout the Porfiriato. State executives throughout the country took over public instruction revenues and administration from the municipalities, following the recommendations of the National Conferences of Public Instruction in 1889-1890

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<sup>62</sup> Ley de Instrucción Pública para el Estado, *Periódico Oficial*, 15, 18 and 22 Jan 1879. For a brief and celebratory history of the Puebla Teacher Training Colleges, see 'Datos breves relativos a la vida del Instituto Normal del Estado' in *SURSUM Revista Mensual*, Year II, No. 17-18, Puebla, Sep 1954, pp. 21-30

<sup>63</sup> For the effects of Porfirian centralisation in the Sierra, see Guy Thomson, 'Porfirio Díaz y el ocaso del partido de la Montaña, 1879-1892 ¿Fin al liberalismo popular en la sierra de Puebla?' in Romana Falcón and Raymond Buve (comp.) *Don Porfirio Presidente, nunca omnipotente. Hallazgos, reflexiones y debates, 1876-1911* (Mexico: UIA, 1998).

<sup>64</sup> Ley de Instrucción Pública, Orgánica del Título XI de la Constitución, *Periódico Oficial*, 27 March 1893.

and 1896.<sup>65</sup> In states like Tlaxcala and Estado de México, where Porfirian centralisation reached the educational budget, redistribution favoured municipal headtowns in detriment of subject pueblos and barrios, which saw their schools close.<sup>66</sup>

In the Sierra Norte de Puebla, by contrast, local control of the Chicontepec tax resulted in the expansion of schooling to the smaller villages. Pueblo schools increased their attendance, including girls, while new schools opened in barrios and rancherías by the turn of the century. In any given municipality, the *cabecera* controlled revenue for its own schools as well as those of the barrios and rancherías.<sup>67</sup> The pueblos, however, kept separate budgets consisting of common and public instruction funds (*fondo del común* and *fondo de instrucción*). This meant that there was no redistribution of resources within the municipality.<sup>68</sup> For instance, Cuetzalan's municipal budget during the Porfiriato only covered schools in the municipal headtown as there were no barrios. Each of the four pueblos of the municipality had to rely on their own locally collected Chicontepec to fund schools. Therefore, they would not receive additional resources from the wealthier

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<sup>65</sup> On centralisation and the legislation set by the Federal District and followed by the states, see Mary K. Vaughan, *The State, Education and Social Class*, pp. 57-66.

<sup>66</sup> Ricardo Rendón Garcini, *El Prosperato*, p. 244. Elsie Rockwell, *Hacer escuela*. Milada Bazant, *En busca de la modernidad*, ch. 3, especially pp. 96-102.

<sup>67</sup> See, for instance, AMZx, box 8-C, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 98. Presupuestos de ingresos y egresos que deben regir en este municipio durante el año de 1898'. Zacapoaxtla, Oct 1897; box 30-E, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 40. Sección de Estadística Noticia sobre poblaciones de más de 4000 habitantes y escuelas establecidas en ellas', Zacapoaxtla, April 1909.

<sup>68</sup> ASMTz, box 14, letter dated Zacapoaxtla 12 July 1873. Ley de Instrucción Pública para el Estado, *Periódico Oficial del Estado Libre y Soberano de Puebla*, 15, 18 y 22 de Enero de 1879.

headtown but, equally, they would not have to contribute to funds that would only benefit schools in the headtown, rather than in their own pueblos.<sup>69</sup>

The relative effectiveness of the Chicontepec tax was brought to light by the crisis that resulted from the revolutionary outbreak and the abolition of head taxes in 1917, which will be explored in the second part of this thesis.

### School Administration

The ambitious educational legislation of nineteenth-century Mexico was more a project than a law to be strictly enforced. In the Sierra Norte de Puebla, the prescriptions of state legislation and regulations were adapted to local conditions in practice. As with the contentious implementation of *desamortización*, formal education was negotiated between state officials, local governments and villagers. Neither federal, state nor municipal government had the resources necessary to make education available to all male children aged 6 to 14 and all female children aged 6 to 12.<sup>70</sup> For a start this would have required an administrative infrastructure that was only beginning to develop in the Porfiriato. The federal government could not legislate on education beyond its jurisdiction over Mexico City and the territories. Its role in the rest of the country was limited to fostering educational

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<sup>69</sup> The latter situation was sometimes a source of complaint from barrios in the Sierra, which for this and other reasons often sought to be upgraded to pueblo status and opened their own school. See, for instance, the case of Cuauximaloyan (Xochiapulco) in Florencia Mallon, *Peasant and Nation*, pp. 290-92.

<sup>70</sup> *Reglamento de La Ley de Instrucción Primaria*. 1883. (Puebla: Imprenta del Hospicio, 1883), pp. 3-4.

conferences attended by professionals and officials in charge of education in Mexico City and the various states throughout the country.<sup>71</sup>

In the state of Puebla, educational legislation followed the broad principles approved by the federal government. The state executive through its Higher Council of Education (*Consejo Superior de Educación*) designed the programmes of primary and higher education and oversaw their implementation through a small network of inspectors.<sup>72</sup> Because the state executive had a minimal administrative infrastructure and provided no funds, *jefes políticos* and municipal authorities had considerable scope for action.<sup>73</sup> These authorities were responsible for practically every aspect related to the implementation of educational legislation, from collecting the taxes that fed the public instruction fund in the municipal treasury to drawing up school censuses, building schools and examining pupils. Pueblos and municipal capitals reported to the *jefe político* who, in turn, reported to the state executive in Puebla City. Supervision by the state executive came through a handful of inspectors, generally graduates of the Teacher Training College in Puebla City, who visited schools throughout the state.<sup>74</sup> Inspection became regular from the 1890s onwards, with two or three visits per year. The preoccupation with hygiene reflected in the National Conferences of Education dominated the inspectors' reports, which focused on the

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<sup>71</sup> Ernesto Meneses Morales, *Tendencias Educativas Oficiales en México*, Volume I. (México: CEE-UIA), pp. 438-494, 691-707.

<sup>72</sup> *Reglamento de La Ley de Instrucción Primaria*. 1883, pp. 32-46

<sup>73</sup> *Ley de Instrucción Pública para el Estado*, *Periódico Oficial del Estado Libre y Soberano de Puebla*, 15, 18 and 22 Jan 1879.

<sup>74</sup> This was the case of Felipe Franco, Puebla graduate and later inspector for the Sierra Norte. See *SURSUM Revista Mensual del Magisterio*, year II, no. 17-18, Puebla, Sep 1954, pp. 25-27.

conditions of the school buildings and their furniture, to the detriment of any observation of teaching and learning practices in the classroom.<sup>75</sup>

Additionally, the state's Higher Council of Education prescribed the formation of boards of school inspection (*consejos de vigilancia*) in each district seat. These boards were responsible for observing educational law and regulations, especially the enrolment and attendance of children. They could impose minor penalties (major penalties were imposed by the *jefe político*), nominated juries for examination and were in charge of visiting schools and reporting to the Higher Council. According to the 1883 regulations, the *consejo de vigilancia* comprised three members nominated by the Higher Council and a president nominated by the town council.<sup>76</sup> In the 1893 law, one member was to be nominated by the town council, three were chosen among 'educated citizens' nominated by the *jefe político* and the latter was to preside the board.<sup>77</sup> The greater powers given to the *jefe* in the 1893 legislation, when he was already being appointed by the state governor, were part of the efforts to centralise the administration of education in Puebla. Yet the boards in the districts of Zacapoaxtla (which supervised Cuetzalan) and Zacatlán (which oversaw Huehuetla) were not all-powerful. They organised courses for training teachers and the yearly public examinations, but a board of school inspection in each municipality (*comisión de instrucción pública*) visited schools and charged fines for absenteeism. Generally, the district board merely oversaw procedures and left

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<sup>75</sup> Ernesto Meneses Morales, *Tendencias Educativas*, vol. I, pp. 438-494, 691-707.

<sup>76</sup> *Reglamento de La Ley de Instrucción Primaria*. 1883. *Ley de Instrucción Pública Orgánica del Título XI de la Constitución*, *Periódico Oficial del Estado de Puebla*, 27 March 1893.

<sup>77</sup> *Reglamento de la Ley de Instrucción Primaria*, 2 March 1878 in *Periódico Oficial del Estado de Puebla*, *Leyes y Decretos de 1878*. *Reglamento de La Ley de Instrucción Primaria* 1883, capítulo IV, pp. 32-46.

decisions to municipal authorities. It would only take decisions against the local authorities' will in the cases in which it had to mediate conflicts between pueblos and their headtowns.

According to the regulations, training courses would be organised at the district capital, with the schoolmaster in charge of giving relevant talks to the teachers from schools in the municipal seats. In turn, these teachers would get together with those of the pueblos in their respective municipalities and transmit to them what they had learned at the district capital. Teachers from Cuetzalan attended such courses in Zacapoaxtla and organised their own, but not as frequently as was prescribed. As for Huehuetla, there is no evidence that schoolmasters followed this practice until after the Revolution.<sup>78</sup>

At each headtown and pueblo a municipal board of school inspection (*comisión de instrucción pública*), composed of members of the *Ayuntamiento* or *Junta Auxiliar*, oversaw attendance and the payment of fines by the parents of the absentee.<sup>79</sup> The *Ayuntamiento* board paid monthly visits to all schools in the municipality, which were duly reported to the town council meetings. The *junta auxiliar* board visited the schools in its locality with greater frequency. Therefore,

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<sup>78</sup> On teachers' meetings and training: AMC, box 12, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 39. El Congreso de Profesores del Distrito recomienda se notifiquen a los preceptores', Zacapoaxtla 21 March 1881 and unnumbered exp. 'Relativo al Congreso de Profesores', Cuetzalan 9 July 1881; box 14, 'Exp. no. 17. La Jefatura Política previene se establezcan en este municipio desde el día 1 de Febrero las escuelas sabatinas'; box 21, 'Exp. no. 15. El Presidente del Congreso de Profesores del distrito previene que los preceptores...', 22 Jan 1885 and 'Exp. no. 27. Por disposición del Consejo de Vigilancia del Distrito tendrán lugar las academias en las tardes de los sábados excepto el último de cada mes', Zacapoaxtla 31 Jan 1885.

<sup>79</sup> AMC, box 14, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 18. La Jefatura Política previene que conforme al reglamento de Instrucción Pública se organicen las escuelas de primeras letras en este municipio', Circular no. 8, Zacapoaxtla 16 Jan 1882. ASMTz, box 27, Presidencia, doc. 48, 'Libro de Sesiones de la Junta Auxiliar de Tzinacapan para el año de 1882', entry for 1 April 1882.

pueblo schools were supervised both by pueblo and municipal authorities. Because the members of these commissions lacked pedagogical training and in the pueblos they would generally be illiterate, they observed aspects such as attendance, punctuality in the school timetable, the material conditions of the building, furniture and teaching utensils.<sup>80</sup> When these matters were discussed at the town council, measures were taken to overcome deficiencies. Public instruction funds permitting, material improvements were made. In order to encourage registration and attendance, school census inspectors were called and reminded of their duties.<sup>81</sup>

To what extent were these local administrators, census takers and inspectors efficient? The first step to school children was to count them. School censuses were a key tool for the implementation of educational legislation. Counting the population in a territory was perhaps the most basic and one of the most important acts of government and state-building. Judging solely by this criteria, and given the fact that a number of children escaped registration in the school census, as will be seen in Chapters Two and Three, Porfirian educational administration was not doing very well. Counting also meant distinguishing one person from another and thus differentiating and individualising. Before showing in the following chapters the problems with censuses and how most of the

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<sup>80</sup> For further visits to Tzinacapan's school and an admission from the alderman that he could not report on children's progress due to ignorance see ASMTz, box 37, Presidencia, doc. 58, 'Libro de Actas y Acuerdos de la Junta Auxiliar de Tzinacapan para el año de 1888', entries for July 1888.

<sup>81</sup> For observations on school-building maintenance see ASMTz, box 45, Presidencia, doc. 23, 'Libro de Actas y Acuerdos de la Junta Auxiliar de Tzinacapan para el año de 1892', entry for 11 July 1892 and box 59, Presidencia, doc. 1, 'Libro de Actas y Acuerdos de la Junta Auxiliar de Tzinacapan para el año de 1899', entry for 15 April 1899. Regarding census and tax inspectors see ASMTz, box 68, Presidencia, 'Libro de Acuerdos de la Junta Auxiliar de Tzinacapan que registró durante el año de 1902' (includes the beginning of 1903), entry for 31 Jan 1903.

population avoided schooling during the Porfiriato, the section below considers some of the problems faced by the Porfirian government and educational administration, as well as by today's historian, when trying to identify individuals within Indian populations.

### Naming Citizens

It is well known that the liberal legislation of Independent Mexico abolished the race categories of the colonial period, and with them all the institutions that were built upon such categorisations, including, crucially, the corporate Indian town (*república de indios* or *pueblo de indios*) and Indian tribute. The drastic legislative change resulted in awkward situations in practice. As efforts were made to abolish the term 'Indian', politicians and intellectuals in capital cities would refer to indigenous populations as 'those [formerly] called Indians'.<sup>82</sup>

In the Sierra Norte de Puebla the term *Ciudadano* (citizen), capitalised and preceding a person's name, was applied in official documents to all Indian and non-Indian adult males and had become widespread by the Porfiriato. But the zeal with which the label of *Ciudadano* was adopted varied from district to district with the staunchly liberal having the most committed attachment to the new term. For instance, during a land dispute in the limits between the municipalities of Cuetzalan (in the conservative district of Zacapoaxtla) and Jonotla (in the liberal district of Tetela) a man from San Miguel Tzinacapan (Cuetzalan) was accused of cultivating land that belonged to Jonotla. In their correspondence the Cuetzalan authorities defended the farmer from San Miguel, paternalistically referring to him



as a '*poor indigenous man*', while the Tetela authorities, although accusing him of trespassing another town's property, always referred to him as '*Ciudadano*'.<sup>83</sup> In spite of the existence of the term 'citizen' for all adult males, in both Huehuetla and Cuetzalan, non-Indians were still often referred to as '*gente de razón*' or people who possessed reason, a colonial term that had originated in opposition to the classification of Indians as '*naturales*', that is, belonging to the realm of nature as opposed to that of reason.<sup>84</sup>

Within town and village councils (*junta municipal* and *junta auxiliar*) in the Porfiriato, when discussing the need to raise revenue by demanding special contributions from the population, labels such as '*los de razón*' and '*la clase indígena*' were used. Generally, members of the council would harness support from the population belonging to their group; aldermen *de razón* collected money from their own as did aldermen of the 'indigenous class'. Yet the use of such labels in council minutes was no longer systematic and often no differentiation was made. Some local censuses at the beginning of the Porfiriato still listed people as *de razón* or *indígena* but such labels had practically disappeared in the same type of records by the end of the period. The imposition of equality by the liberal legislation through the erasure of racial categories, against a reality of everyday hierarchies, makes it difficult for the historian to reconstruct a history of relations

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<sup>82</sup> Charles Hale, *Mexican Liberalism in the Age of Mora, 1821-1853* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 218, 228.

<sup>83</sup> AMC, box 2, Presidencia, 'Exp. Sobre disputa de terrenos entre Tuzamapan y Los Reyes, de la Municipalidad de Jonotla y la Municipalidad de Cuetzalan. Por la primera parte se nombra árbitro a Juan Crisóstomo Bonilla y por la segunda a Joaquín Salazar', June 1873.

<sup>84</sup> For the use of the term '*gente de razón*' in colonial Spanish America see James Lockhart and Stuart B. Schwartz, *A History of Colonial Spanish America and Brazil* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), pp. 129-130. For Indians as '*naturales*' see Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge: CUP, 1982), ch.4.

between unequal groups.<sup>85</sup> Additionally, as will be seen below, the Indian population's reluctance to adopt the individualising non-Indian system of naming complicates the task of identifying Indian individuals, including prominent leaders. Yet it is possible to distinguish Indian from non-Indian peoples in the Sierra through the identification of the differing naming practices between the two groups.

Historically, the introduction of a surname inherited from the father for personal naming responded to the religious authorities' concern with consanguineous intermarriage, on the one hand, and to the civil authorities' need to identify individuals for purposes of census-taking, tax-collection, elections, etc. The development of private property and its inheritance were crucial motivations for the emergence of a rational system of naming that would avoid confusing different people who shared the same name.<sup>86</sup>

Both in Cuetzalan and in Huehuetla non-Indians used a first name followed by the father's surname. Sometimes the maternal surname followed the paternal surname as is the case today.

In the pueblos of Cuetzalan Indians did not use surnames, instead they used two Christian names, possibly adopting one from a parent and another from

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<sup>85</sup> For reflections on the erasure of racial categories and the changing terms to refer to the population in Peru and Ecuador, including the problems faced by the historian, see Mark Thurner, *From Two Republics to One Divided*, pp. 13-14, 27-34 and Andrés Guerrero 'The Administration of Dominated Populations under a Regime of Customary Citizenship: The Case of Postcolonial Ecuador' in Mark Thurner and Andrés Guerrero (eds.) *After Spanish Rule*, pp. 285-298.

<sup>86</sup> Stephen Wilson, *The Means of Naming. A Social and Cultural History of Personal Naming in Western Europe* (London: UCL Press, 1998), pp. 115, 132, 137, 150-172, 242-248, 255-259, 336-338.

their godparent.<sup>87</sup> In Tzinacapan for instance, there were only a handful of names (Miguel, Antonio, Francisco, Juan, etc.) and a finite number of combinations (Miguel Antonio, Antonio Miguel, Juan Miguel Antonio, etc.) so that dozens of individuals shared the same name. Local censuses and school lists sometimes differentiated individuals by adding a number to each (Antonio Francisco 1, Antonio Francisco 2 and so on). In the late-nineteenth century some Indians began to adopt mestizo surnames as a second name, possibly taken from a non-Indian godparent, so that there was a greater variety of names and combinations of them but they still did not transmit such names to their descendants.<sup>88</sup>

In Huehuetla, by contrast, Totonacs had a first name followed by a surname inherited from the father, suggesting that either religious or civil authorities succeeded in imposing a more individualising system of naming based on descent, which would facilitate the identification of lineages as well as of individuals. At the same time Totonac surnames were different from non-Indian surnames, a fact which facilitates the historian's identification of Totonacs as

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<sup>87</sup> For Indian naming practices see James Taggart, 'Action Group Recruitment: A Nahuatl Case' and Doren L. Slade, 'Kinship in the Social Organization of a Nahuatl-Speaking Community in the Central Highlands' in Hugo G. Nutini, Pedro Carrasco, James M. Taggart (eds.) *Essays on Mexican Kinship* (University of Pittsburgh Press), pp. 139-140 and pp. 166-167. Enrique Hugo García Valencia, *San Miguel Aguazuelos. Estrategias de Residencia*. (Jalapa: Gobierno del Estado de Veracruz, 1991), pp. 61-77. Norma Luz Ramírez Alpírez, *Las ONGs indígenas, un actor clave en la defensa de la identidad en los municipios de Cuetzalan y Huehuetla* (MA dissertation, BUAP, 2002), pp. 131-132. Lourdes Arizpe, *Parentesco y economía*, pp. 181-192.

<sup>88</sup> In Tzinacapan some of the surnames adopted included Hernández, García, Soto, Téllez, Jiménez, López and Vázquez. See AMC, box 23, Instrucción Pública, Padrón general de los niños a quienes obliga la instrucción primaria en este pueblo', Tzinacapan 1 Jan 1886; box 87, Instrucción Pública, Padrón general de los niños a quienes corresponde la instrucción primaria en el año de 1904', Tzinacapan 31 Dec 1903 and ASMTz, box 37, Presidencia, doc. 83, Padrón de familias de la 1a. sección de San Miguel Tzinacapan, year 1888.

opposed to non-Indians.<sup>89</sup> However, there was not much variety in either names or surnames so that even using surnames, Totonac individuals are difficult to identify as they share a very limited number of names and surnames.<sup>90</sup> For instance, in the 1912 census of taxpayers there were five individuals called Bonifacio Gaona, and just as was the case in towns where Indians had no surnames, the census-taker attached a number from 1 to 5 to each of the Bonifacio Gaonas in town.<sup>91</sup> Living in small communities where face to face interaction occurred frequently among its inhabitants, local census takers, authorities and the population at large could, of course, identify the different individuals using a nickname or referring to who their parents were, where they lived, etc. However, such practice was no solution for identifying increasingly anonymous individuals in the higher levels of administration.<sup>92</sup>

The case of the Nahua leader of the Sierra Juan Francisco Lucas (1834-1917) suggests that the more enterprising Nahuas, who had received an education, benefited from the disentailment of communal land and mediated between the Nahua- and Spanish-speaking worlds, were adopting more individualising naming practices. Juan Francisco Lucas was the child of María Francisca and José Manuel

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<sup>89</sup> See Appendix One.

<sup>90</sup> AMH, box 2, Presidencia, 'Padrón general que contiene el censo de habitantes de este pueblo de Huehuetla en el año de 1875'; box 3, Instrucción Pública, Padrón de niños que existen en esta población a quienes es obligatoria la Instrucción Primaria para el año 1890 conforme al Reglamento de la ley de 1 de enero de 1883, Caxhuacan 1 Dec 1889; box 4, Instrucción Pública, Padrón de las niñas de esta cabecera para quienes es obligatoria la instrucción en el año de 1888, Huehuetla, 1 enero 1888; box 12, Presidencia, Padrón General de los habitantes existentes en esta cabecera, Huehuetla 10 March 1891. AMZ, Instrucción Pública, Padrón de los niños para quienes es obligatoria la instrucción primaria en esta municipalidad en el año de 1904, Huehuetla 31 Dec 1903 and Padrón de las niñas para quienes es obligatoria la instrucción primaria en esta municipalidad en el año de 1904, Huehuetla 31 Dec 1903

<sup>91</sup> AMH, box 50, Presidencia, Padrón de contribución municipal personal, Huehuetla 1 Jan 1912.

Lucas. All of their names were Spanish Christian names, but, as has been observed by anthropologists for a later period, the Christian name Lucas had become a surname which José Manuel Lucas shared with his brother and transmitted to his son. The practice of taking one of the father's Christian names as a surname to hand down to children became a pattern when Juan Francisco Lucas's children took Lucas as a surname, thus following non-Indians' naming practice.<sup>93</sup> The practice of using three names occurred in Porfirian Cuetzalan, Francisco Agustín Dieguillo being the most prominent example, but the use of two names was more common. This further suggests that it was the more acculturated and prominent leaders who adopted individualising names. Yet Juan Francisco Lucas and Francisco Agustín Dieguillo represented a fully literate and bilingual elite. Most Nahuas of their time had less individualising naming practices until teachers' and authorities' attempts to encourage the non-Indian practice of naming finally succeeded.

When teachers became more explicitly linked with a growing educational bureaucracy, and had to produce more detailed records of school activities, they were under greater pressure to avoid confusing schoolchildren because of the repetition of names. Many began assigning surnames to children who did not have them. In Xochiapulco, long-time teacher Manuel Pozos is said to have assigned surnames to his pupils and encouraged the practice of passing them on to descendants.<sup>94</sup> While surnames were practically non-existent in 1870, by 1900 the

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<sup>92</sup> Lourdes Arizpe, *Parentesco y economía*, pp.189-191.

<sup>93</sup> Doren L. Slade, 'Kinship in the Social Organization', p. 157. David LaFrance and Guy Thomson, 'Juan Francisco Lucas: Patriarch of the Sierra Norte de Puebla' in William H. Beezley and Judith Ewell, *The Human Tradition in Latin America. The Twentieth Century* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1987). Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 41-43, 268-272.

<sup>94</sup> Interview with Sergio Oscar Gutiérrez, Xochiapulco 4 Feb 2002.

majority of the population in the municipality used surnames. Given that there were few non-Indians in Xochiapulco who could have given their names to Nahuatl children when acting as godparents, and that some of these surnames were borrowed from patriotic heroes, it is most likely that this change was indeed a result of the schoolteacher's efforts as well as the Xochiapulquenses' willingness to adopt changes. In this, as in the quality of education and literacy rates, Xochiapulco foreshadowed changes that would only come decades later to its neighbouring municipalities and districts in the Sierra.<sup>95</sup> In San Miguel Tzinacapan (Cuetzalan) the national system (using a personal name chosen by parents followed by the father's surname and the mother's surname) was only adopted from the 1940s, coinciding with federal teachers becoming very active and influential in the region.<sup>96</sup>

## Conclusion

This chapter has described how the contribution of the Sierra population to state building, through its participation in the liberal struggles of the nineteenth century, was compatible with a considerable degree of local autonomy. Both as soldiers and taxpayers *serranos* retained autonomy because the National Guards were

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<sup>95</sup> Guy Thomson, 'La republique au village', p. 60.

<sup>96</sup> For naming practices in Tzinacapan see Miguel Osorio Sierra 'Familia, organización y trabajo' and Antonio Vázquez Carrión, 'La evolución de la organización en la comunidad' both in Eduardo Almeida y María Eugenia Sánchez (eds.) *Conocimiento y Acción en Tzinacapan. Autobiografías razonadas*. (México: UIA - UV- UAEM, 2001), pp. 101-102, 160-178. Various interviews with Estela Martínez, San Miguel Tzinacapan, between 15 October 2001 and 27 March 2002. For further evidence that teachers introduced surnames in Indian communities see Alan Knight, 'Popular Culture and the Revolutionary State in Mexico, 1910-1940', *HAHR*, 74:3 (1994), p. 412, n. 92.

locally controlled and taxation to a great extent fed municipal coffers. Additionally, the municipal seats and pueblos, although officially subject to liberal legislation, preserved customary Indian forms of government, thus representing yet another haven of autonomy. Secondly, we have observed the changes undergone as a result of the centralising policies of the Porfiriato. This affected the National Guards and one of the head taxes, the *contribución civil*, but it did not reach the head tax dedicated to education, known as Chicontepec. Through the Chicontepec tax and the local boards of school inspection, municipalities retained control of education.

At the same time that a degree of *serrano* autonomy was preserved, the Indian population, in spite of keeping much of their own forms of government, was suffering the increasing encroachment of bilingual and literate non-Indians upon local administration. In what follows I will examine how municipal education indirectly contributed to this encroachment, and to what extent.

Additionally, the coming chapters will explain how the hybrid forms of government that developed in the municipalities contributed to sustaining schools. In Cuetzalan, customary practices to raise funds allowed for the collection of the Chicontepec tax. Both in Cuetzalan and Huehuetla the precarious stability of inter-ethnic *Ayuntamientos*, and their relationship with the population, further influenced the provision of education. The following chapters will explore the situation of schools in order to assess their role in the communities and whether they contributed, or not, to turning the children of the Indian soldiers and taxpayers of the Sierra into citizens of the liberal state.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Cuetzalan During The Porfiriato**

This chapter studies the municipality of Cuetzalan after 1875. The first section outlines the implementation of liberal legislation and the increasing encroachment of non-Indians upon communal land and administration. It then considers how the interaction between customary forms of organisation and the liberal administration resulted in a contested but ultimately effective arrangement for the collection of school taxes. The second section examines how this process shaped the expansion of education in the municipality and presents an assessment of the limited impact of schools upon the population. Throughout the chapter I focus on the Nahuatl pueblo of San Miguel Tzinacapan, where the local council (*junta auxiliar*) was composed of Indian authorities but the secretary was non-Indian. The case of Tzinacapan allows us to observe the accommodation reached between Indians and non-Indians, despite tensions. It also shows how schools were sustained by the population, through the punctual payment of Chicontepepec taxes, and were relatively well attended. However, for reasons explored in the last section, the education which these schools provided failed to promote the use of the Spanish language and literacy, or the formation of a bilingual and literate Indian leadership.



## **I. Paying for Progress: San Miguel Tzinacapan and Cuetzalan in 1875**

The first pages of this section briefly relate the Nahuatl rebellion which sought to stop, and even reverse, non-Indian acquisition of land in the headtown of Cuetzalan and the pueblo of San Andrés Tzicuilan. It then focuses on the pueblo of San Miguel Tzinacapan, where there were no land conflicts, and discontent towards non-Indian intrusion was expressed in complaints against the non-Indian secretary, who tried to raise the fee for the Chicontepec tax (school tax), overstepping his functions. The assessment of the conflict in Tzinacapan serves to examine the following issues: a) the relations between authorities at the different administrative levels, namely, the *jefatura política* (district administration), the municipal seat and the pueblo; b) the changes and conflicts brought about by both liberal legislation and increasing political participation of non-Indians, including discontent towards Indian authorities who tolerated non-Indian interference, heightened factionalism, and resistance to participating in the compulsory offices of local government and to paying taxes; c) the peculiar organisation of the Chicontepec tax collection, which, instead of following liberal legislation, adapted colonial practices for funding religious festivities and applied them to the collection of the new liberal taxes with good results, and d) the lack of linguistic and administrative skills among the Nahuatl population and the near-monopoly on bilingualism and literacy enjoyed by the pueblo secretary.

## The Pueblo of San Miguel Tzinacapan, Municipality of Cuetzalan

In the early nineteenth century the municipality of Cuetzalan was almost entirely Nahua. Towards the mid-century the incipient flux of non-Indian settlers still known as '*gente de razón*', increased. Seizing the opportunity of disentailment policies, they began to acquire land in the municipal seat of Cuetzalan and the nearby pueblo of San Andrés Tzicuilan. They raised cattle, owned brown sugar (*panela*) mills and distilleries and started growing coffee. Their properties never surpassed 300 hectares, a modest size in comparison with the estates of the plains in the central part of the state of Puebla. However, they were close to town centres and in comparison with the native Nahua peasants' small cultivation plots, they appeared as a threatening encroachment. In 1868 Francisco Agustín Dieguillo, an Indian National Guard commander, who had participated alongside Montaña leaders in the war against European intervention, initiated a rebellion against the encroachment of *gente de razón* on Nahua lands. Known as Pala Agustín Dieguillo among the Nahua, he received the support of *pasados* and the Nahua villagers in both the municipal headtown of Cuetzalan and the pueblo of San Andrés Tzicuilan. Agrarian rebels remained belligerent until 1877 when Francisco Agustín Dieguillo took the municipal presidency, after direct municipal elections were introduced by his Montaña ally Juan C. Bonilla. Dieguillo continued to be elected president in the 1880s until non-Indians

took over in 1888. A final failed attempt at rebellion, including Dieguillo amongst the leaders, took place in 1894.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast to the municipal seat of Cuetzalan, where the agrarian rebellion started, and the pueblo of San Andrés Tzicuilan, where the land conflict overshadowed existing resentment towards the secretary, conflict within San Miguel Tzinacapan crystallised around issues of taxation and the role of the secretary. The comparatively small presence of non-Indians in Tzinacapan and the modest size of their properties suggest an explanation. In 1874 the census of San Miguel Tzinacapan registered a population of 1,385. It would be the last census to disregard liberal regulations that abolished race distinctions, listing non-Indians under a separate heading and additionally indicating in which quarter (*sección*) they lived: '*Quinta sección de las familias de razón que viven en este pueblo*'. Subsequent censuses do not have the heading for *gente de razón* but still list the same families, living in the same *sección*, so segregation continued in spatial terms.<sup>2</sup> But the presence of non-Indians in Tzinacapan was small; there were only 15 of such families comprising 67 inhabitants.<sup>3</sup>

Between the beginning of the privatisation of common lands in December 1867 and August 1870, 459 land titles were issued to new private plots in San Miguel Tzinacapan. This was just below the 520 granted in Cuetzalan. However, the average value of the plots in Tzinacapan, at \$11.44, was considerably lower than those in

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<sup>1</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan'. Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968. Testimonios de un legado documental*. (Manuscript, 2000), pp. 176-80.

<sup>2</sup> Anthropologists found the term *gente de razón* was still used in late twentieth-century Cuetzalan, Hugo G. Nutini and Barry L. Isaac, *Los pueblos de habla náhuatl*, p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> ASMTz, box 15, Presidencia, doc. 36, 'Padrón General de San Miguel Tzinacapan. Año de 1874'.

Cuetzalan at \$36.75 and San Andrés Tzicuilan at \$43.50. Non-Indians directed their ambitions to the municipal seat and to San Andrés Tzicuilan as their land was of greater quality. The average value of these plots was also greater because of their size.<sup>4</sup> In Cuetzalan and Tzicuilan the biggest surpassed 200 hectares and sometimes reached 300 hectares, whereas the average size of land plots privatised in Tzinacapan between 1869 and 1875 was 30 hectares. The largest was that of non-Indian Francisco Aparicio who obtained a title in 1869 for 60 hectares valued at \$168. Until 1875, non-Indians benefited disproportionately to their presence in the census. Nevertheless, many Indians also benefited. The average size of Indian-owned plots was very similar to those of non-Indians. The average value in pesos was also very similar for the plots owned by Indians and non-Indians. The properties of Francisco Aparicio and Pedro Mora (the latter owned 20 hectares valued at 86 pesos) were an exception. Their greater value, after taking into account their size, suggests they were of better quality.<sup>5</sup> The advances of these non-Indians were nevertheless minor compared to the cases of Cuetzalan and San Andrés Tzicuilan. This explains why the Migueleños did not join Pala Agustín's rebellion.

There were nonetheless signs of their reluctance to give up their commons. For instance, in 1875, the *junta auxiliar* of Tzinacapan tried to recover a plot that had been granted to Pedro Manzano. The disentanglement fee was called 'rent' as though the

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<sup>4</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan', p. 213.

<sup>5</sup> ASMTz, box 15, file 2, Tesorería, doc. 242, 'Registro de escrituras repartidas a los adjudicatarios de este pueblo correspondientes a los terrenos del común con excepción del avalúo y rédito anual de ellos', Tzinacapan 30 Jan 1874; box 62, 'Libro en que se registran las escrituras de terrenos adjudicados, conforme a la ley de desamortización, 1900'; box 66, file Presidencia, 'Noticia de los bienes propios que corresponden a esta Junta', 26 March 1901.

land was still the council's property rather than Manzano's but the *jefatura* protected the new owner. A second case was that of Blas Mora. He acquired 20 hectares formerly in possession of an Indian villager. The local authority disapproved of Mora's placing of a fence around the property and required him to withdraw part of it as it was barring access to a public stream.<sup>6</sup> In any case, the single most important non-Indian person in Tzinacapan had not even benefited from disentailment yet. He was Serapio Galicia, a twenty-six-year-old man from Cuetzalan, married and father of a four-month-old baby. Serapio Galicia's registered occupations were shoemaker and schoolteacher. According to the village census, he was one of the only two literate non-Indian men.<sup>7</sup> Among Indians, only twelve adult men of a population of around 1,400 were reported to know how to write. In any case in 1873 and 1874 none of the pueblo councillors, judges or tax collectors could read or write nor sign their names.<sup>8</sup> Possessing such rare skills as reading and writing gave the secretary considerable power. In what follows, the relations between villagers, Nahua authorities and non-Indian secretary will be analysed in some detail, after a brief consideration of the strength of Indian pueblo government.

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<sup>6</sup> ASMTz, box 16, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 112. Relativo a una petición que hace la Junta Municipal a la Jefatura Política del terreno que posee en adjudicación el C. Pedro Manzano', Nov 1875 and 'Exp. no. 119. Referente a una solicitud que hizo la Junta para que el C. Blas Mora no cerque la fracción de terreno que desea', Nov 1875.

<sup>7</sup> Among non-Indians only five people could read and write: an adult woman, two boys aged 12 and 14 and two married men. The total population in 1875 was 1444 inhabitants. ASMTz, box 16, Presidencia, doc. 88, 'Padrón General del censo de familias del pueblo de San Miguel Tzinacapan. Año de 1875'.

## Pueblo Rule and Revenue: the 1875 Disorders

It has been observed that the Indian pueblo administration in 1860s Cuetzalan was stronger than that of the municipal seat. Cuetzalan's town council struggled to fill posts and found Indians reluctant to serve as officials and to provide courier and labour services for a council with a non-Indian president. This was to a great extent the result of Nahuatl discontent towards the new settlers resident in the municipal seat. By contrast, Indian local authorities in the subject pueblos enjoyed greater support from their fellow villagers, facilitating the filling of unpaid local posts and the provision of labour for the village's public works under the system known as *faenas*.<sup>9</sup> The compulsory character of the cargo system and the importance attributed to it by Indian villagers confirms this view. However, we should not overestimate the strength of Indian authorities' rule.

The case of San Miguel Tzinacapan in 1875 points to the complexities of internal politics and the difficulties faced by Indian authorities to keep an orderly administration of public affairs, at a time when liberal principles and non-Indian authorities were further penetrating local administration and provoking division among the population. As Indian authorities allied with the non-Indian secretaries imposed by municipal or district governments, they lost legitimacy in the eyes of many, and opposition to both authorities and secretary emerged. Although cargo

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<sup>8</sup> ASMTZ, box 14, Presidencia, 'Libro de sesiones de la Patriótica Junta Municipal de este pueblo', entries for 23 Sep 1873, 14 Oct 1873, 21 Sep 1874 and 20 Feb 1875.

<sup>9</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian Conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan (Sierra de Puebla): The Rise and Fall of "Pala" Agustín Dieguillo, 1861-1894', *HAHR*, 71:2 (1991), pp. 215-217.

systems continued, liberal legislation became a weapon for those who wanted to resist compulsory systems of government and participation. Opposition and factionalism within a village manifested themselves through foot-dragging, resistance or outright refusal to participate in cargo systems and *faenas* or to pay taxes, including school imposts. Additionally, factions' discontent with authorities seized upon new forms of organisation, such as the village bands, in order to harness support.

The year 1875 was particularly turbulent in San Miguel Tzinacapan. Conflict over taxation, including the Chicontepec tax to fund schools, and discontent towards the authorities and the village secretary, who was also the schoolteacher, make 1875 Tzinacapan a good starting point to consider the running of schools and their political context in the municipality. Subsequent tranquillity and the apparent order of internal affairs throughout the Porfiriato suggest that a basic understanding or a form of domination was achieved after the rebelliousness and violence of 1875. Because these events touched upon most of the key issues of rule and revenue within Indian pueblos, they are worth looking at in some detail.

Early in 1875 we find the first signs of division within San Miguel Tzinacapan. A faction of Indian villagers disapproved of the local authorities. Pedro Lorenzo, Francisco Juárez, Juan Vasquez and José Francisco, all Indian residents who could not sign their names, complained, in the name of 'the majority of the pueblo', to the *jefe político*. The source of grievance was the local authorities' apathy towards the pueblo's progress. They specifically referred to their plan to form a band and lamented that no meeting had been organised for this purpose despite their petitions to the council. A fortnight later, Tzinacapan's mayor informed the *jefe político* that

they had had a *junta popular* (village meeting) regarding the formation of a *cuerpo filarmónico*.<sup>10</sup> The majority of those present said that they were too poor to provide cash and they were already busy repairing the church. They proposed to obtain revenues from the cultivation and sale of maize, which they offered to do over the space of two years in order to gather the necessary amount to purchase the musical instruments.<sup>11</sup>

This episode brings up several issues. The villagers' complaint in favour of the band had a very serious tone. Why would they be so concerned with the establishment of a philharmonic corps in Tzinacapan? Were there any unspoken aims behind the formation of a brass band? During the civil and patriotic wars, liberal authorities and National Guard commanders, aware of the martial importance of music, had promoted the formation of philharmonic corps. Musicians became strong supporters and the amenities provided to villagers further strengthened the liberal authorities' links to the governed. In the most zealously liberal municipalities, where Catholic ritual had been severely restricted, philharmonic corps provided an alternative ceremonial life.<sup>12</sup> However, this was not the case in San Miguel Tzinacapan, where almost every adult man paid the mustering-out tax while authorities in Cuetzalan and Zacapoaxtla in 1875 were far from being jacobin anticlericals. There are no signs of links between Tzinacapan's supporters of the band and the National Guard in Cuetzalan, nor any trace suggesting links with Pala Agustín

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<sup>10</sup> Literally this means 'philharmonic corps', in the Sierra at the time it was the name for town and village brass bands.

<sup>11</sup> ASMTz, box 16, Presidencia 1875, Exp. no. 7. 'Relativo a la queja de varios vecinos ante la JP contra el Presidente de la Junta Municipal por la plantación de una música'.

<sup>12</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism'.



or any Cuetzalan rebel. As we will see below, the supporters of the music in Tzinacapan opposed the pueblo authorities on various grounds beyond the issue of the philharmonic corps. This suggests the project for a music band in Tzinacapan and the complaint it raised was the catalyst for greater discontent and, if successful, the opposition could use it as a means to strengthen its position. Indeed, the Montaña liberals had successfully used bands to forge new alliances against old networks of power.<sup>13</sup>

The late 1860s and the early 1870s was a particularly prolific period of band formations in the Sierra. It coincided with the sale of community and *cofradía* lands, releasing funds for the purchase of instruments.<sup>14</sup> A release of such funds was susceptible of dispute. Who would benefit from them, Church, civil authorities, the secretary or the pueblo? Tzinacapan's opposition could have been trying to make sure that it was they who benefited through the formation of a philharmonic corps. At the meeting called by the authorities to consider the formation of the band, after the opposition's complaint, villagers refused to contribute with cash but offered to raise funds by growing corn. That was precisely one of the ways by which *cofradías* (brotherhoods or confraternities) funded village civil and religious needs before the dissolution of corporate institutions by liberal legislation.<sup>15</sup> This suggests that

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<sup>13</sup> For a wider view on the political and ceremonial significance of music bands, and their propagation throughout the country, see Guy Thomson 'The ceremonial and political roles of village bands, 1846-1974 in W.H. Beezley, Cheryl E. Martin and William E. French (eds.), *Rituals of rule, rituals of resistance. Public celebrations and popular culture in Mexico* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1994).

<sup>14</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism', p. 53

<sup>15</sup> Terry Rugeley argues that the demise of *cofradías* has been exaggerated. He remarks that often the same practices continued only with different names: 'Instead of referring to them as *cofradías* per se,

villagers were considering using at least some of their old corporate resources and traditional forms of organisation to fund the music. In fact, the philharmonic corps in Cuetzalan was partly funded with the proceeds of a *milpa*.<sup>16</sup> Yet the opposition did not find this solution satisfactory.

Finally, the project for a philharmonic corps competed with an older village concern and focus of the pueblo identity: the church building.<sup>17</sup> Villagers' labour, which could have been put to fundraising for music, was at that moment directed to church repairs. The philharmonic corps would have to wait, since villagers calculated that two years were necessary to save enough money for the purchase of instruments. The *jefe político* had little sympathy for the authority-defiant supporters of the music band. Far from disapproving of villagers' interest in church repairs or attempting to redirect resources to lay rather than religious purposes, *jefe político* Miguel Arriaga

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locals simply described them as "a plot of land with cattle whose revenues support the village saint" or some similar formula'. Terry Rugeley, *Of Wonders and Wise men. Religion and Popular cultures in Southeast Mexico, 1800-1876*. (University of Texas Press: Austin, 2001), p. 149. Elsie Rockwell found that such a system was used in post-revolutionary Tlaxcala to fund schools. Elsie Rockwell 'Schools of the Revolution'. On *cofradías* see also William Taylor, *Magistrates of the Sacred*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), ch. 12. On fund raising and Indian village organisation more generally see Arij Ouweneel, 'Altepeme and Pueblo de Indios. Some comparative and theoretical perspectives on the analysis of the colonial Indian communities' in Arij Ouweneel and Simon Miller (eds.) *The Indian community of colonial Mexico. Fifteen essays on land tenure, corporate organization, ideology and village politics* (CEDLA: Amsterdam, 1990).

<sup>16</sup> ASMTz, box 14, Presidencia, 'Sobre el daño en las milpas del cuerpo filarmónico de Cuetzalan', Cuetzalan 29 April 1873.

<sup>17</sup> On the decisive role of the church building in granting a community pueblo status and its significance for the pueblo identity see Tzinacapan's oral history CEPEC, *Tejuan*, pp. 84-88. For the Sierra more generally see Bernardo García Martínez, 'Pueblos de Indios, Pueblos de Castas: New settlements and traditional Corporate Organization in Eighteenth-century New Spain' in Arij Ouweneel and Simon Miller (eds.) *The Indian community of colonial Mexico*.

approved of the popular meeting's resolution and understood the need to repair Tzinacapan's church.<sup>18</sup>

April 1875 was an eventful month in Tzinacapan. Division within the village became more vocal, with complaints against the authorities and secretary, and petitions that they be removed. The *jefe político* decided to replace Tzinacapan's *presidente* with the *presidente suplente* (deputy mayor). Additionally, there was opposition from Chicontepec and *rebajados* collectors. Resistance from tax collectors had appeared as early as 1873. In this year there were several cases of refusal to receive the appointment, or simply of negligence to complete the task. Tzinacapan's council feared that more would follow the example of the non-compliant and widespread disobedience would ensue.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, in 1875, all *rebajados* collectors retained payments. Moreover, an apprehensive deputy mayor of Tzinacapan reported that Chicontepec collectors also refused to pay punctually, continuously delaying payments. They demanded a substantial discount in the total amounts due and they were collecting villagers' signatures for reasons unknown, but clearly worrying for the authorities.<sup>20</sup> After receiving death threats, Tzinacapan's Indian authorities pleaded with the *jefatura* to accept their resignation on 3 April 1875. The *jefe político* did not accept the block resignation and he ordered that Pedro Francisco

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<sup>18</sup> On Xochiapulco's insistence on funding secular education before church building see Florencia Mallon, *Peasant and Nation*, pp. 290-92. For the case in Tzinacapan see ASMTz, box 16, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 7. Relativo a la queja de varios vecinos ante la jefatura política contra el Presidente de la Junta Municipal por la plantación de una música', 1875.

<sup>19</sup> ASMTz, box 14, Borrador de oficios, entries for 26 Dec 1872; 3 Jan, 1 and 14 April, 13 May and 3 June 1873.

<sup>20</sup> ASMTz, box 16, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 36. Relativo a un parte que se dio a la Jefatura por la oposición de los exactores de la contribución de la Guardia Nacional', April 1875.

(Tzinacapan's new *presidente suplente*) and all the original members of the council stayed.<sup>21</sup> Judging by the tone of his letters, Miguel Arriaga was growing impatient with the feebleness of Tzinacapan's council, which was unable to exercise authority with the firm decision which the situation required.<sup>22</sup>

On 11 April a meeting took place regarding 'the peace of the residents of this pueblo'. The project to form a brass band was discussed again. According to the copy of the meeting's minutes penned by secretary Serapio Galicia, the majority of villagers present were of the view that a philharmonic corps might become burdensome.<sup>23</sup> Those supporting the corps, apparently no longer concerned with the details of the music project, when summoned to attend, refused to do so, but sent a message calling for the authorities' resignation. Nonetheless, according to Galicia's minutes, the 191 villagers present at the meeting 'unanimously' decided to support the authorities, who, in any case, had the support of the *jefe político*.<sup>24</sup> On 20 April, Francisco Juárez, one of the supporters of the band, was accused of threatening the authorities with rebellion.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> ASMTz, box 16, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 32. Relativo a la remoción del Presidente de la Junta Municipal de este pueblo', April 1875.

<sup>22</sup> For further evidence of the authorities' weakness, in this case expressed in the form of disobedience from the ministers of the rod, see ASMTz, box 16, Justicia, doc. dated 9 July 1875.

<sup>23</sup> No evidence was found of the existence of a *cuerpo filarmónico* in Tzinacapan until April 1882. ASMTz, box 27, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 49', April 1882.

<sup>24</sup> ASMTz, box 16, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 36 bis. Acta levantada en la Junta Popular que tuvo lugar en este pueblo el día 11 del presente mes para tratar sobre la paz de los vecinos de este pueblo', April 1875.

<sup>25</sup> ASMTz, box 16, Justicia, 'Exp. no. 39. Referente al parte que se dio a la jefatura a consecuencia de las faltas cometidas en la sala capitular por los individuos Francisco Juárez y Juan Trinidad', April 1875.

Meanwhile the headtown of Cuetzalan was facing serious problems. Disorders caused by the agrarian conflict between Nahuas and *gente de razón* were aggravated by deep factionalism among the latter. When the alarmed authorities and secretary of Tzinacapan sought help, all the Cuetzalan authorities did was to offer arms for their protection.<sup>26</sup> Two days after a couple of weapons were given to Tzinacapan's authorities, in a defensive gesture that showed Cuetzalan's lack of control of the situation and their failure to maintain public peace, the entire town council of Cuetzalan was forced to resign. The *jefatura política* had received charges of corrupt and inefficient administration and the case of 'disorder in Tzinacapan' had been presented as evidence of their incompetence. Mayor Ramón Vázquez stepped down while an entirely new administration headed by Miguel Calderón took office on 24 April. In the new council there were five Indians including Francisco Agustín Dieguillo as *síndico segundo*.<sup>27</sup>

During the second half of April, repairs were needed for the bridge connecting the municipality of Cuetzalan with that of Jonotla, across the Tozán river. It was important to complete the works before the heavy downpours of the rainy season started. The Tozán bridge was an important line of communication between the jurisdiction of Zacapoaxtla and that of Tetela district, connecting with the Totonac *tierra caliente*. The bridge was within San Miguel Tzinacapan but it obviously benefited the whole municipality in facilitating trade and communication across the

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<sup>26</sup> ASMTz, box 16, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 41. Relativo a otro parte que se dio a la cabecera por los escandalosos de este pueblo', April 1875.

<sup>27</sup> AMC, box 5, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 44. Contiene la remoción del Ayuntamiento por el jefe político', April 1875.

region.<sup>28</sup> Tzinacapan's authorities not only demanded that Cuetzalan and the other three pueblos in the municipality contribute to the repairs, but refused to work until all were called to *faenas*. This was a rather daring position which suggests that the pueblo was taking advantage of the weakness of the municipal council and the power they could yield by virtue of their labour force and the supplies they could provide. It also demonstrates that, although the Tzinacapan authorities supported the Cuetzalan protégé, Serapio Galicia, they were not necessarily submissive to all demands from the headtown. The case of the Tozán *faenas* in April also shows a change of tone from the authorities in Cuetzalan. Ramón Vázquez, who had to resign later in the month, was firm in his demands that Tzinacapan dutifully carry out orders for work and provision of food for paid masons; faced with disobedience, he even imposed a fine on Tzinacapan's *presidente*.

Towards the end of the month, it was the new municipal president, Miguel Calderón, who dealt with the *faenas*. He accepted the excuse of heavy rain for villagers not turning up to work on one occasion, and, when rain could no longer be used as an excuse for *faena* workers' failure to turn up, rather than reprimanding the local authorities, Calderón asked them to use their prudence and persuasion to obtain the villagers' compliance. He still surmised that if they did not collaborate with labour they would be later asked for cash.<sup>29</sup> Thus Calderón adopted a moderate

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<sup>28</sup> The route continued to be commercially relevant for peasant families in the first half of the twentieth century. Yolanda Argueta, 'María Antonia Hermelinda: Una Historia de Vida' in Eduardo Almeida Acosta y María Eugenia Sánchez Díaz de Rivera (eds.) *Conocimiento y Acción en Tzinacapan. Autobiografías razonadas*. (México: UIA - UV- UAEM, 2001), pp. 82-84.

<sup>29</sup> ASMTz, box 16, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 37. De los documentos u oficios ocurridos en virtud de la obra que se está construyendo en el puente de Tozán', April 1875 and 'Exp. no. 54. Relativo a una

approach, while the *jefatura política* in Zacapoaxtla, headed by Miguel Arriaga, had a hard line on the issue. The *jefe político* refused to listen to petitions citing the constitutional abolition of compulsory unpaid labour. The reasons for Arriaga's neglect of the constitution were pragmatic; public works were needed and cash was lacking. Villagers' labour was therefore deemed indispensable. Miguel Arriaga's view coincided with that of his brother, Francisco Javier Arriaga, deputy of Zacapoaxtla to the state congress, who had an ambitious project for road building in the Sierra, relying mainly on *faenas*.<sup>30</sup> For their part, the Indian authorities of 1875 Tzinacapan did not invoke the constitution, nor did they reject *faenas* per se; they merely sought to negotiate their terms.

August was as eventful as April and brought a conclusion to the most pressing problems of Tzinacapan. The *jefatura política* continued to be closely engaged in the Cuetzalan disturbances and had to consider the removal of the secretary and schoolteacher Serapio Galicia. Complaints against the pueblo's council, especially the secretary, and petitions for their removal reached the *jefe político*. But opposition was expressed not only through legal means; there were also signs that an eruption of violence might occur. News reached Cuetzalan's new mayor, Miguel Calderón, who made his way to the pueblo on 17 August. There, the *presidente* of San Miguel Tzinacapan explained that the night before various opponents of the authorities had gathered in the *casa cural*. The next morning around sixty men appeared before the

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solicitud que se hace al Presidente del Ayuntamiento de Cuetzalan a fin de que reparta a los pueblos de su municipio las faenas que se hacen en el puente del Tozán', May 1875.

<sup>30</sup> AMC, box 5, Presidencia, Miguel Arriaga to the Mayor of Cuetzalan, Zacapoaxtla 9 Dec 1875. Francisco Javier Arriaga, *Expediente Geográfico-Estadístico* (México: Imprenta del Gobierno en Palacio, 1873).

town council, 'not being clear who was heading them as they all spoke at the same time'.<sup>31</sup> They demanded the treasury accounts from Galicia but the secretary only made a brief appearance and then disappeared, promising he would bring the treasury's funds.<sup>32</sup> On the same day, San Miguel Tzinacapan's collectors of the Chicontepec tax made their way to Zacapoaxtla, the district capital. There, a scribe, perhaps a self-taught lawyer, listened to them and wrote a complaint addressed to the *jefe político*. None of the collectors nor the villagers who supported the complaint, could sign their names.<sup>33</sup> The cause of complaint was the rise of the tax to 'one and a half *reales* per person, without exception'. The problem was far from being merely economic. Indeed, it revealed many of the issues and difficulties faced in Indian pueblos. The rise in taxation had been decided and imposed by Serapio Galicia, who was effectively in charge of the treasury despite there being an Indian male as treasurer. The aggrieved villagers petitioned for the secretary to be withdrawn and replaced by a person 'from this town'. Tzinacapan's Chicontepec collectors, and the villagers supporting them, resented the presence of a person from the headtown of Cuetzalan, and a non-Indian. They also described Galicia as an extortionist who continuously sought to impose his will. But the matter was not as simple as abusive secretary versus oppressed villagers who decided to speak out. The collectors and their supporters accused the pueblo's council (entirely formed by Nahua villagers) of

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<sup>31</sup> AMZx, box 38, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 61. Abril 1875. Relativo a una queja de la autoridad de Tzinacapan contra varios de aquellos vecinos como trastornadores del orden público', Miguel Calderón to Jefe Político, Cuetzalan 17 August 1875.

<sup>32</sup> AMZx, box 38, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 61'.



indolence for not having removed the incompetent and oppressive secretary. Tzinacapan's residents were indeed divided in their opinion of Galicia. With regard to the tax rise, they opposed it on the basis of two arguments. First, because of 'the miserable circumstances' of this 'poor and depressed pueblo'. Secondly, because it was the collectors themselves, and not the individual contributors, who paid the total monthly fees for each village quarter (*sección*), due to a 'badly established custom'. Therefore, the collectors found that at the end of their period they could not cover even their most basic needs.<sup>34</sup> The petitioners were called to the *jefatura*. After the meeting, Miguel Arriaga reported he had reconciled differences between the villagers and the secretary. He further reported that the promoters of the dispute were aware that if there was a riot or a meeting that provoked the alarm of the village again, they would be punished. They were granted bail.

In the correspondence between Tzinacapan's threatened members of the *junta* and the *jefe político*, it is clear that the opposition had lost all respect for the village authorities. An encounter, narrated by Antonio Francisco, justice of the peace of Tzinacapan, to the *jefe político*, on 19 August, suggests the root of this lack of respect lay in the servility of the village authorities to the will of the non-Indian secretary 'as has been customary for a long time'.

A group of men from this locality, headed by the mutineers and rabble-rousers...[and] addressing me with insults...enquired whether I

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<sup>33</sup> The precise number of petitioners is unknown, the letter claims to be supported by 'many' villagers. Given its timing, it is likely that the group of around sixty men, who were reported to have gathered on the night of 16 August and the following morning, supported the complaint.

<sup>34</sup> AMZx, box 38, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 61', Tzinacapan villagers to Jefe Político, Zacapoaxtla 17 Aug 1875.

had joined those who [...] tolerated that the question of the secretary remained as has been customary for a long time.<sup>35</sup>

After the protesters accused the authorities, the president told the rebellious men to obey commands from the *jefatura* but, far from showing any respect, they responded with laughter. The justice of the peace found the situation intolerable and left. However, only two days later judge Juan Bautista portrayed the defiant men as reformed.<sup>36</sup> He reported that they attended a call for a meeting with the authorities, pleaded forgiveness for the insults directed to the justice of the peace, and vowed not to do it again. We might be sceptical of Juan Bautista's account of submission as reported to the *jefatura*. He could have made it up to present a more respectable image to the *jefe político*. Did these rebellious men, laughing at local authorities, suddenly become submissive? In another context, James C. Scott has observed that shows of submission are a common performance of rebellious subordinates to prevent further reprimands, and they do not necessarily mean the rebels have given up.<sup>37</sup> Perhaps the Tzinacapan defiant men did behave obediently in front of Juan Bautista but were simply putting up a performance to avoid further conflict. Yet, whatever the case, Tzinacapan's outspoken opposition had already given up the fight. Even if they still believed that the local authorities were not worthy of their respect, the *jefe político*'s authority was a different matter. On 21 August, far from offering further

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<sup>35</sup> AMZx, box 38, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 61', Antonio Francisco to Jefe Político, Tzinacapan 19 August 1875.

<sup>36</sup> AMZx, box 38, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 61', first letter from Juan Bautista to Jefe Político, Tzinacapan 21 August 1875.

<sup>37</sup> James C. Scott, *Domination and the arts of resistance. Hidden transcripts*. (Yale University Press, 1990), especially ch. 4 and pp. 192-206, 215-216.

resistance, the Chicontepec collectors paid the fees corresponding to July and August.<sup>38</sup>

The rebels willingly presented themselves to the *jefatura* as compliant, but they also presented their case and complaint for the injustice suffered at the hands of the local secretary with the connivance of the village authorities. In the last piece of evidence of the conflict, we learn that the village opposition was summoned once more to Zacapoaxtla after a new accusation of riot. Once in the district seat, they argued their case in a letter addressed to the *jefe político*, dated 23 August 1873. The letter began by expressing the villagers' conformity with the decision of Arriaga regarding the conflict with the secretary over taxation. They appreciated that the charges against them had been lifted and they felt the issue was over. Secondly, they presented a new case against the secretary who, apparently, was due to leave the pueblo. The villagers complained they were being forced to buy Galicia's property in Tzinacapan, land that was not extensive enough to distribute and was highly overpriced. Having refused the purchase, they were called rioters by the authorities and secretary. Among other conventional modes of address to the *jefe político*, the letter offered an expression of submission to the *jefe's* authority at the same time that it presented a criticism of the secretary's pretensions:

Obedience is natural to us, it is practically the religion of our unfortunate race, and without reservations of any sort, we come before our *Ciudadano Jefe*, ready to respect his will. But before concluding, we must inform you that the council's secretary has behaved unfairly, putting an exorbitant price on his property and finding excuses to harm the municipality.

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<sup>38</sup> AMZx, box 38, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 61', second letter from Juan Bautista to Jefe Político, Tzinacapan 21 August 1875.

Despite the complaint against the secretary, the last sentences of the letter showed the surrender of Tzinacapan's opposition:

As far as we are concerned the C. Galicia may live in Tzinacapan, preserve and increase his interests, remain or not in his post as secretary of the council, take permanent residence in the village or not; we only ask that he leaves us alone since the C. Municipal President has given no solutions to the predicament in which we have been left.<sup>39</sup>

Apparently, the villagers did not have to buy Serapio Galicia's small property but neither did they see him leave. Perhaps Serapio Galicia perceived acquiescence among the former rebels and decided to stay. Whatever the reason, he would be secretary up to 1887 as well as schoolteacher up to 1882.<sup>40</sup>

The final result of this litany of mutual accusations was summarised in the decisions taken by Cuetzalan mayor Miguel Calderón, as reported to the *jefatura política*. The Chicontepec tax fee was fixed at one *real*, midway between the one and a half Galicia had requested and the half or three quarters the rebellious villagers offered to pay. The outcome had in fact left things as they were at the start; the initial fee before the conflict had been one real. The rebellious tax collectors did not succeed in their attempts to reduce the fee but at least they prevented the rise.

Additionally, Calderón observed that Tzinacapan was in a position to sustain a girls' school. Juan Bautista dutifully sent a report on school funding dated 30 August. Although Calderón had not said anything about the likely attendance at the girls' school, Juan Bautista assumed it would be for non-Indians. He reported that it was

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<sup>39</sup> 'C.' stands for *Ciudadano*. AMZx, box 38, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 61', Tzinacapan villagers to Jefe Político, Zacapoaxtla 23 Aug 1875.

<sup>40</sup> The decision to separate the posts of secretary and schoolteacher is registered in ASMTz, box 27, Presidencia, 'Libro de Sesiones de la Junta Auxiliar de Tzinacapan, 1882', entry for 18 Februray 1882.

convenient to open such school 'because in this pueblo there are fifteen *familias de razón*.'<sup>41</sup> This situation suggests that Chicontepec could be an exploitative exaction, extracting money from the Indian population to pay for the few and better off non-Indian girls attending school. If that was the case, Chicontepec would then resemble the onerous and exploitative colonial tribute, rather than form part of a new liberal practice of citizenship. In any case, and in spite of Calderon's claims, the current Chicontepec income was insufficient for opening a new school. In fact, it was \$66 short. It was proposed that the money needed be taken from the disentailment fees as these were the only funds available. However, the project did not progress and Tzinacapan would not open a girls' school until 1890.<sup>42</sup>

#### The Chicontepec Tax or How Tradition Funds Modernity

The actions of Chicontepec collectors in Tzinacapan raise several issues. Besides disapproving of the secretary and the Indian council who tolerated him, collectors were drawing attention to the negative consequences of the customary arrangement for collecting funds. Why was it that collectors, rather than contributors, produced the monthly amount of all tax payers corresponding to their *sección*? Evidence suggests that the obligation to be a tax collector (*jefe de sección* or *colector*) was perceived as

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<sup>41</sup> AMC, box 5, Presidencia, 'Noticia del número de escuelas que existen en esta cabecera municipal. 23 Sep 1875', Tzinacapan to Cuetzalan, 30 August 1875.

<sup>42</sup> Similar reports, probably prompted by Calderón, were produced in October by the three other pueblos in the municipality, stating that it would be convenient to open a girls' school. AMC, box 5, Presidencia, 'Noticia del numero de escuelas que existen en esta cabecera municipal. 23 Sep 1875', Letters to Cuetzalan, 27-30 October 1875.

similar to serving in other unpaid public offices, including those for the service of the Church, within the arrangements of a cargo system. According to Tzinacapan's council minutes, throughout the Porfiriato two tax collectors were appointed for each section of the pueblo, and for each head tax (Chicontepec and *contribución civil*), every four months, thus allowing for the rotation of all adult men. As will be seen below, in paying for the whole *sección*, collectors were following a system that resembled the customary forms of fundraising for religious festival known as *mayordomías*.

In July 1873, Tzinacapan's mayor complained to the *jefatura política* that Juan Miguel Antonio always refused to fulfil the offices to which he was appointed, and characterised him as a disobedient citizen. Contesting the man's petition to be exempted from service as tax collector, the mayor further argued that it was fair that he should take his post since other villagers had even fulfilled such duty twice. The mayor dismissed the argument that Juan Miguel Antonio's brother already had a post as *topil*. In the authorities' view, the post of Church *topil* was not too demanding, merely requiring sweeping the church every fortnight. Moreover, the petitioner's brother's obligations should be seen as separate, since they were both adult married men 'who fend for themselves'.<sup>43</sup>

In another case, in 1877, Andrés Pedro Martín petitioned the *jefe político* to exempt his son José Francisco Rafael from the post of Chicontepec tax collector. He argued that his other son had recently served the same post for which he, Andrés Pedro Martín, was still in debt. The petition written in Tzinacapan eloquently

explained the 'onerous routine' for the monthly payment of Chicontepec. It was a 'vicious and well-established custom' that they did not collect a single cent from contributors but paid from their own pockets the total monthly amount, for thus it had been established 'from time immemorial'. In reply to the *jefatura política*, Tzinacapan's mayor denied that the authorities required tax collectors to pay from their own pockets. He claimed that villagers did it that way to avoid the embarrassment of going around collecting money or having to present themselves to the authorities empty handed. He further claimed that if a collector brought before him a reluctant contributor, he would retain him until he complied, but if the collectors did not point to disobedient taxpayers there was little he could do. The mayor further considered, as the 1873 mayor had done in the previous case, that it was fair to ask José Francisco Rafael to take the post as he had not done it before. Moreover, these younger men's responsibility should be considered as separate from their father's because they were both married and lived in independent households. The *jefe político* ordered that the appointment be retained and, that the contributors, and not the collectors, be expected to pay.<sup>44</sup>

Tzinacapan's president's explanation for the peculiar arrangement for tax collection is not convincing. Perhaps it was true that embarrassment played a role but long-standing customary practices to raise funds for village expenses suggest a more satisfactory account. If Tzinacapan's authorities did not refer to them it was because

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<sup>43</sup> ASMTz, box 14, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 42. Referente a una queja del C. Juan Antonio ante la Jefatura para cesar del empleo de Jefe de Sección', July 1873.

<sup>44</sup> AMZx, box 40, 'Exp. no. 138. Relativo a una queja que interpuso ante esta jefatura el C. Pedro Martín de Tzinacapan por virtud de haber sido nombrado su hijo Lorenzo Antonio, cobrador de contribución de Chicontepec', September 1877.

they knew that the higher authorities would disapprove of the persistence and adaptation of customary practices that distorted the implementation of liberal legislation.<sup>45</sup> One such customary practice was that of *mayordomías*. A *mayordomía* was a religious post that could form part of a *cargo* system. It consisted of the individual sponsorship of local devotions. William Taylor and John K. Chance argue that during the nineteenth century, with the dissolution of corporate forms of organisation, and specifically of *cofradías*, individual *mayordomos* became responsible for payment that was previously reliant on the common funds of the *cofradía*.<sup>46</sup> We must notice, nevertheless, that 'individual responsibility' included the support of family and ritual kinship (*compadres*), just as we have seen for the tax collectors.<sup>47</sup> From the descriptions given by tax collectors themselves, we may assume that fundraising for liberal taxes was similar to that of religious *mayordomías*,

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<sup>45</sup> *Jefe político* Lauro Luna repeatedly disapproved of the system whereby collectors paid for a whole *sección* from their own pockets. See AMC, box 10, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 98 Ocurso presentado por los jueces de sección y comisionados del cobro de chicontepec y la personal de esta Villa, suplicando sean relevados', Lauro Luna to Presidente Cuetzalan, Zacapoaxtla 28 July 1880; Presidente Cuetzalan to Lauro Luna, Cuetzalan 29 July 1880; box 14, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 10. La Jefatura Política remite un ocurso presentado por Juan Alatraste quejándose de que a su padre se mandó traer preso por la contribución de escuela, sin embargo de encontrarse postrado en su cama', Lauro Luna to Presidente Cuetzalan, Zacapoaxtla 12 Jan 1882; Francisco Agustín Dieguillo to Jefe Político, Cuetzalan 17 Jan 1882.

<sup>46</sup> J. K. Chance and W.B. Taylor, 'Cofradías and Cargos: An historical perspective on the Mesoamerican civil-religious hierarchy', *AE*, 12 (1985), 1-26.

<sup>47</sup> Anthropologists for the Sierra Norte de Puebla and elsewhere have emphasised that *mayordomía* duties are fulfilled by household units, where women's work is crucial, and with support from extended family and *compadres*. Holly F. Mathews ' "We are Mayordomo": A Reinterpretation of Women's Roles in the Mexican Cargo System', *AE*, 12:2 (1985), pp. 285-301. Alessandro Lupo, *la tierra nos escucha. La cosmología de los nahuas a través de las súplicas rituales* (México: INI-SEP, 1973), pp. 43-44.



where a head of household sponsored a religious ceremony with a yearly contribution. In the case of tax collection the amount was smaller but had to be produced monthly.

Finally, the fact that it was actually the collectors who paid the total amount due from the contributors of their section would explain why, in April 1873, Tzinacapan's mayor reported to Cuetzalan that Chicontepec collectors had recently adopted the habit of retaining the collected fees and demanding that some contributors be exempted.<sup>48</sup> This did not benefit the particular contributors exempted but rather the collectors, and since all villagers took turns to be collectors, then all benefited from individual exceptions.

After Tzinacapan's collectors' complaints, the authorities at the municipal and district headtowns insisted that it should be individual contributors who paid. However, as we have seen above, collection in Tzinacapan continued to resemble *mayordomía* arrangements at least until 1877 and probably for longer. Forms of organisation which had originated in the colonial period underwent important transformations in the nineteenth century. Although changes were adopted in response to radical reforms introduced by liberal legislation, the organisation that emerged did not necessarily correspond to the liberal ideal of individual, atomised citizens. Instead, the unexpected outcome was a peculiar combination of individual and collective resources: a hybrid form of organisation had developed. In Tzinacapan this meant that the schools of the modern liberal state were being funded by tradition.

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<sup>48</sup> ASMTz, box 14, Presidencia, Borrador de oficios, entry dated 14 April 1873.

## Conclusion

The case of Tzinacapan demonstrates that the existence of a cargo system did not mean its obligatory service was entirely uncontested. The introduction of liberalism did not bring about a clear-cut change. Old forms of community organisation continued but customs and traditions, if not abolished, began to be subject to scrutiny and contestation. As Terry Rugeley put it when considering the situation of the Church and especially of *cofradías*, the great transition of the nineteenth century was from a compulsory to a voluntary organisation.<sup>49</sup> Even if cargos continued to be served dutifully in most instances, they became subject to individual resistance and rejection from time to time. Under certain circumstances, as in the 1875 conflict in Tzinacapan, cases of widespread disobedience occurred. But at least in this case, the issue of tax collection was subordinate to the protestors' main concern: the abuses of the non-Indian secretary.

The solution of the 1875 disorders in San Miguel Tzinacapan were an example of the relative strength of district rule. The protests were not contained by the municipal headtown (Cuetzalan) because this suffered from a lack of legitimacy at least as sharp as that of Tzinacapan, but the *jefe político* in the district headtown managed to re-impose order. In the last documents relating to Tzinacapan's disorders, it is already evident that the new town council in Cuetzalan, headed by Miguel Calderón, felt much stronger than its predecessor. During 1876, the municipality was found ready to contribute with cash and food supplies as well as men (Francisco

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<sup>49</sup> Terry Rugeley, *Of Wonders and Wise men*, p. 74.

Agustín Dieguillo and his National Guard soldiers) to the Tuxtepec revolution. In 1877, the most pressing problems of factionalism among *gente de razón* in Cuetzalan were solved by a pact among the factions, by which they vowed to forget differences and to contribute peacefully to the order and progress of the municipality.<sup>50</sup>

After 1875, there was no explicit opposition to the authorities or the secretary in San Miguel Tzinacapan. There were cases of individual resistance to public service and taxation but no collective action. The faction of Tzinacapan villagers who consistently opposed the authorities and secretary failed to oust Serapio Galicia. Several circumstances explain their failure. First, it was clear that a good many of villagers were content with or at least tolerated the existing forms of village administration. Secondly, the presence of the non-Indian secretary, whether it was Serapio Galicia or anyone else, would always be defended by the municipal or district headtown elite. Realisation of this fact of life in the Sierra was probably what turned the belligerent opposition of Tzinacapan into acquiescent villagers, once factionalism in the headtown of Cuetzalan was kept under control with the intervention of the *jefe politico*. Thirdly, Tzinacapan's opposition lacked a leadership that might have increased their bargaining power with municipal and district authorities. In Cuetzalan and San Andrés Tzicuilan, Nahua villagers were organised around the leadership of *pasados* and Francisco Agustín Dieguillo, a National Guard commander who could read and write. In Tzinacapan none of the protesters could read or write, or even sign

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<sup>50</sup> AMC, box 7, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 18. Reconciliación habida entre todos los vecinos de esta cabecera', 1 March 1877. Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan', pp. 252-53.

their names.<sup>51</sup> There is no evidence of *pasados*' stance on the conflict but it seems plausible that they supported the current authorities, whom they probably had chosen themselves. Furthermore, some features of Tzinacapan's opposition suggest they were young villagers ready to question traditions. A group unconcerned with church repairs supported the formation of a philharmonic corps while the tax collectors questioned customary forms of collecting funds. Yet they failed to appropriate one modern trait that would have aided their struggle: Spanish literacy.

As far as schools were concerned, the stability reached in Tzinacapan after the 1875 disorders, allowed for moderate progress during the Porfiriato. The constant revenue of Chicontepec provided for the punctual if parsimonious payment of schoolteachers, as well as a modest supply of school materials and building repairs. This is particularly important if we compare it with the widespread view that Mexican teachers in the Porfiriato suffered from constant delays in their salaries.<sup>52</sup> In the Sierra Norte de Puebla, delays were rare due to the effective collection of Chicontepec. The relative effectiveness of this tax was brought to light by the crisis that resulted from its abolition in 1917.

Chicontepec paid for teachers' salaries and *faenas* provided for school construction and repairs. But what actually happened in the classroom? Who attended

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<sup>51</sup> The usefulness of bilingualism and literacy in political life has been highlighted for protests against taxation in Porfirian Tlaxcala and for agrarian politics in the Tarascan village of Naranja (Michoacán), among other cases. See Ricardo Rendón Garcini, *El Prosperato*, ch. 1; Paul Friedrich, *Agrarian Revolt in a Mexican Village* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), pp. 60-61, 71-73 and Paul Friedrich, *The Princes of Naranja. An Essay in Anthrohistorical Method* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), pp. 4-6, 18, 58, 68-69.

<sup>52</sup> See, for instance, the letters from teachers all over the country to Don Porfirio in Luz Elena Galván, *Soledad compartida. Una historia de maestros*. (México: SEP, 1991), ch. 4 and appendix.

school and what did they get out of it? To answer these questions we now turn to section II, which gives an overview of schools in the municipality, with special emphasis on San Miguel Tzinacapan.

## **II. A Façade of Progress? The Strengths and Weaknesses of Schools**

Building upon the discussion of the Chicontepec tax, which was efficiently collected throughout the Porfiriato, this section examines the schools that were sustained with such funds. First, the majority's lack of interest in schools, and the authorities' complicity with such an attitude, is considered by means of an examination of school censuses, which failed to list all the children of school age. Resistance to formal education is also explored for the case of San Andrés Tzicuilan, where tense relations with the municipal authorities and the encroachment of non-Indians on the pueblo's land resulted in the foundation of the barrio of Zacatipan. Political tensions in San Andrés Tzicuilan and Zacatipan reinforced negative attitudes to schools, resulting first in the torching of the school building in Zacatipan and later in poor attendance in both the pueblo and the barrio.

Secondly, this section outlines educational provision in Cuetzalan and focuses on the case of the pueblo of San Miguel Tzinacapan, where Indian children were more likely to attend school than anywhere else in the municipality. This was due to a combination of factors, including the pueblo's freedom to collect Chicontepec taxes as well as better relations with the municipal authorities and the non-Indians from the *cabecera*. Given the relative strength of schooling in Tzinacapan, classroom practices in the schools of this pueblo are examined. Serious deficiencies are found, especially in relation to language problems, which undermined achievements such as the rise in attendance figures and the opening of a girls' school.

## Voting with their Feet

When it came to the everyday tasks of administration, the drawing up of a census of school-age children was the first step on the path towards compulsory education. Figures reported by local authorities provide the first sign that universal education was more a utopian dream than an achievable goal. School censuses throughout the Porfiriato show inconsistencies and sometimes clearly implausible figures. Between 1871 and 1900, the total population of the municipality of Cuetzalan rose from 8,000 to 12,000 (see Table 1 below) while the number of school-age children, as reported by municipal authorities to the district capital, oscillated between 1000 and 1400 representing only 12 to 14 per cent of the total.<sup>53</sup> It is unlikely that the male population aged 6-14 and the female population aged 6-12 represented such a small percentage. These figures suggest the local authorities were underestimating the number of school-age children. Indeed, if we calculate the number of boys aged 6-14 and girls aged 6-12 from the 1900 national census figures, and compare them with the municipal authorities' data in 1899, we find the latter were reporting only 52 per cent of the total school-age population listed in the national census. In other words, they failed to register in the local school census 801 boys and 502 girls. Similar inconsistencies appear in the data available for each pueblo.<sup>54</sup> Exceptionally, in 1889, a report on public instruction gave a higher figure for the total school-age population in the municipality: 2,676. This was consistent with figures reported in the 1900

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<sup>53</sup> See Table 2 in Appendix Two.

<sup>54</sup> See Tables 3, 4 and 5 and note for table 3 in Appendix Two.

national census and was probably closer to the real number.<sup>55</sup> But the fact that local censuses could be so inaccurate warns against relying on national census figures, which inevitably depended on local collaboration and could have also been flawed, as has been found in other studies.<sup>56</sup>

Table 1.  
Total Population in the Municipality of Cuetzalan, 1871-1910.<sup>57</sup>

Localities	Category	Population			
		1871	1899	1900	1910
Cuetzalan (municipal seat)	Villa	4101	5184	6371	6994
San Miguel Tzinacapan	Pueblo	1289	1843	1809	1862
San Andrés Tzicuilan	Pueblo	1347	1938	2417	1689
Santiago Yancuitalpan	Pueblo	519	935	702	760
Xocoyolo	Pueblo	543	845	756	878
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7799</b>	<b>9745</b>	<b>12055</b>	<b>12183</b>

Once the census was made, teachers and municipal authorities had to report figures of registration and attendance in relation to the total number of school-age children. It was acknowledged that registration and attendance were always far below the ideal of

<sup>55</sup> AMC, box 30, Instrucción Pública, Exp. no. 25. Asunto relativo al estado que guardó la instrucción primaria en esta municipalidad el año próximo pasado', 6 June 1889 and box 31, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 38. Asunto relativo al informe que sobre varios puntos del ramo de Instrucción Publica se rinde al ejecutivo del distrito', 7 Nov 1889.

<sup>56</sup> For the rural town of San José de Gracia in Michoacán, Luis González observed that in 1910 men hid from census takers in the fear that the register would be used to call them for military service. Luis González y González, *San José de Gracia. Mexican Village in Transition* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1974), p. 119.

<sup>57</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian Conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan', p. 218. AMC, box 67, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 22. Relativo a que el inspector Francisco Cortés comenzó a practicar su visita', Noticia del número de habitantes del municipio, 1899. AMC, box 123, Presidencia, 'Datos que se ministran al profesor C. Francisco Cortés, Inspector de Instrucción', Cuetzalan 13 April 1910.



universal schooling. Yet, when figures were remarkably low, district authorities, whether the *consejo de vigilancia* or the *jefe político* himself, would demand that municipal officials and teachers take measures. A long record of low attendance could damage a local authority's reputation.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, they had strong incentives to keep the census of children as low as possible so that their registration figures were not too small a proportion of the total number, and that their school attendance figures were as close as possible to the total of registered pupils.

Additionally, authorities were likely to encounter resistance among the population to having their sons and daughters registered in the census. Having one's children counted was the first step to being obliged to send them to school. Once children were registered, teachers kept attendance lists which were forwarded to municipal and district authorities who were in charge of fining the absentees' parents. Thus evading the census was the parents' first and probably easiest strategy to escape schooling without a fine. In order to evade the census some could count on the remote location of their homes, difficult to reach from municipal seats and town councils. Others could gain the complicity of the inspectors (*jefes de sección*) in charge of compiling a census for the demarcation where they lived.<sup>59</sup> Reluctance to send children to school and the strategies used to avoid municipal education will be explored below for the case of Zacatipan, a new barrio in the pueblo of San Andrés Tzicuilan.

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<sup>58</sup> See, for instance, the concern expressed by Cuetzalan's alderman in charge of education in a private letter sent to the secretary of Tzinacapan, ASMTz, box 68, Presidencia, José María Hernández to Silverio Mora, Cuetzalan 3 March 1903.

<sup>59</sup> 'Reglamento para la inscripción en los padrones municipales', 29 March 1886 in *Periódico Oficial del Estado de Puebla*, Leyes y Decretos de 1878.

When asked by an anthropologist about the origins of Zacatipan, in the late 1960s, an elderly resident succinctly replied 'They arrived and we left', thereby implying that the foundation of the barrio of Zacatipan was a result of the encroachment by outsiders on the pueblo of San Andrés Tzicuilan.<sup>60</sup> In fact, when the mestizo population of Cuetzalan began to acquire land in San Andrés Tzicuilan, there were two major responses from the original Nahuatl population: to join Francisco Agustín Dieguillo's agrarian rebellion or to leave the town centre, heading for uncontested land. Thus some left Tzicuilan's church and town hall behind, walked down the deep ravine, across the river Cuichat and up the mountain to a point called Zacatipan where they established a new barrio. Appearing close to Tzicuilan on the map, Zacatipan was in fact separated from the centre of the pueblo by an impressively steep gully.<sup>61</sup>

The men and women who settled in Zacatipan could argue that geographical conditions, rather than choice, prevented their children from attending school. Indeed, visitors generally observed, and authorities claimed, that the long distance (up to three leagues) and difficult pathways from children's homes to Tzicuilan's town centre greatly hindered attendance. Long and tortuous distances to schools due to the Sierra's dispersed pattern of residence and abrupt geography were very frequently presented as the reason for low registration and attendance throughout the region.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Lourdes Arizpe, *Parentesco y economía*, p. 60.

<sup>61</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian Conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan'. Lourdes Arizpe, *Parentesco y economía*, p. 43.

<sup>62</sup> See, for instance, AMC, box 7, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia sobre establecimientos de educación primaria', Cuetzalan 4 June 1877 and box 12, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 102. Por disposición del gobierno del estado se formarán los padrones de los niños de ambos sexos que concurren a los

An obvious solution for Zacatipan was to open a school in the barrio itself. Indeed in 1875, when Cuetzalan was just coming out of a political crisis, the newly formed town council, eager to please the higher authorities, proposed the opening of a mixed school in Zacatipan and girls' schools in Tzinacapan, Yancuitlalpan and Xocoyolo. The town council prompted its dependent pueblos to report on the state of their public instruction fund and of the resources available to open the new schools. But neither the girls' schools nor Zacatipan's mixed school were opened immediately.<sup>63</sup>

The plan for a new school at Zacatipan seemed particularly ambitious given that there was already one at the centre of the pueblo of Tzicuilan and it was not particularly buoyant. In 1874 the boys' school in Tzicuilan had 36 pupils registered but in April only 4 were attending due to a smallpox epidemic.<sup>64</sup> In 1877 attendance remained at a low of 9 pupils. Towards the end of the decade conditions somewhat improved. In September 1879 Tzicuilan was the first pueblo in the municipality to finish the construction of its town hall, including the room for the boys' school.<sup>65</sup> By October 1881, Tzicuilan's school registration had reached 53 boys.<sup>66</sup> Yet, registration and attendance in Tzicuilan, a pueblo of comparable population and more productive

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establecimientos de instrucción primaria así como de los que no concurren y la causa de que no la reciban', Oct-Dec 1881.

<sup>63</sup> AMC, box 5, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia del número de escuelas que existen en esta cabecera municipal', Cuetzalan 23 Sep 1875.

<sup>64</sup> AMC, box 3, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 7. Noticia de los establecimientos de educación primaria', April 1874.

<sup>65</sup> AMC, box 9, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 32. Noticia geográfico-estadística que corresponde a este municipio', 13 Sep 1879.

<sup>66</sup> AMC, box 12, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 102. Por disposición del gobierno del estado se formarán los padrones de los niños de ambos sexos que concurren a los establecimientos de instrucción primaria así como de los que no concurren y la causa de que no la reciban', Oct-Dec 1881.

land than San Miguel Tzinacapan, remained consistently and significantly lower than Tzinacapan.

Zacatipan's school finally opened in the early 1880s. But soon after, in July 1883, the building was burned down. The authorities in Cuetzalan believed it had been done on purpose; a rebellious and anonymous act against all the efforts of the *cabeceras* to sustain and expand schooling. The Cuetzalan council, headed by Francisco Agustín Dieguillo but otherwise composed of non-Indian men, imposed a fine on all the villagers of Zacatipan until the name(s) of the culprit(s) came out. Presumably, the authorities acted in the belief that the innocent, in trying to avoid the fines, would reveal the name of the wrongdoer.<sup>67</sup> However, the perpetrators of the school fire remained anonymous and the authorities eventually returned the money from the fines.<sup>68</sup> The population of Zacatipan may have remained silent out of ignorance or fear of reprisal from the arsonists, or perhaps out of sympathy or complicity. If it was the latter, or a combination of all these factors, we must conclude that at least some villagers did not want a school. For them, the dispersed pattern of residence in Zacatipan and the distance to the centre of Tzicuilan was not the cause of

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<sup>67</sup> AMC, box 17, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 72. El Jefe Político avisa de recibo del presupuesto que venció la fuerza que había ido a Zacatipan con motivo del incendio que tuvo lugar en la escuela de niños', 14 July 1883 and 'Exp. no. 99. Contiene un acta que se levantó en el pueblo de Tzicuilan con motivo de que las multas que se cobraron a los vecinos de Zacatipan por el incendio de la casa escuela se inviertan en otro nuevo local', 11 Aug 1883. Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, pp.178-179.

<sup>68</sup> AMC, box 17, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 116. Notificación que se hizo a los vecinos de Zacatipan para hacerles devolución de las multas que habían enterado por el incendio del local que se ocupaba para escuela de niños en el punto de Zacatipan', 8 Nov 1883; 'Exp. no. 20. Actas que contienen la devolución del dinero que por multas habían enterado los vecinos de Zacatipan por el incendio del local de la escuela, así como las listas de los que habían enterado dicha multa', 19 and 24 Nov 1883.

school absenteeism. The latter was a by-product of a conscious decision to evade the reach of municipal authorities, including opting out of official education.

When the families of San Andrés Tzicuilan left the town centre and founded Zacatipan, their main concern probably was to find uncontested land. But they must have also looked forward to the advantages brought by being remote from Tzicuilan and, even more, Cuetzalan. The difficulty of reaching their place of residence facilitated peasants' avoidance of taxes, donations and other payments. Census takers, tax collectors and school inspectors could miss them, heavy storms and the subsequent landslides could effectively isolate them from the centres of power. Most peasant parents must have welcomed the ease with which their children could escape the school census, or could cite difficult paths as the excuse for non-attendance, thereby remaining free to participate fully in the family's division of labour.

Zacatipan was only one more instance in which Indian peasants 'voted with their feet' and they chose to hide away from the agents of the emerging state.<sup>69</sup> While in Tzicuilan some chose to disperse and found a new village, in other cases villagers simply moved to another pueblo hoping to confuse the authorities and their censuses. In San Miguel Tzinacapan, for instance, throughout the Porfiriato, the authorities sought to prevent individuals migrating to other municipalities and districts in order to evade head taxes and registration in school. Auxiliary presidents pleaded with the neighbouring authorities not to admit the residence of men who owed taxes in their

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<sup>69</sup> Peasants' fleeing from the excessive demands of tax and labour from colonial government is considered in detail in Nancy Farris, *Maya Society Under Colonial Rule. The Collective Enterprise of Survival*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press 1984), pp. 67-79. Similarly to Mexico, peasants in nineteenth-century Peru migrated to the hills to avoid poll-tax, public works labour and military conscription, see Mark Thurner, *From Two Republics to One Divided*, p. 92.

original village or who were known to eschew schooling.<sup>70</sup> Some did not migrate and simply claimed their children were registered in the school of a neighbouring pueblo to avoid attendance in their own.<sup>71</sup>

Two years after the arson attack the school at Zacatipan had 50 boys attending regularly. They surpassed the school at Tzicuilan's town centre, which had only 32 attending.<sup>72</sup> In 1887 figures were very similar for Tzicuilan and Zacatipan.<sup>73</sup> The Tzicuilan council had to provide a guide to accompany the teacher up and down the deep ravines to reach Zacatipan. The task was performed by one of the men occupying the lowest post in the cargo system, so that once more customary arrangements provided for the municipal schools.<sup>74</sup> It seemed that attitudes to schooling had improved and the worst obstacles had been surmounted, but attendance

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<sup>70</sup> See, for instance, ASMTz, box 29, Presidencia, doc. 23, 'Libro de Sesiones de la Junta Auxiliar de Tzinacapan para el año de 1883', entry for 7 July 1883; doc. 61, Presidente Auxiliar Juan Antonio to Presidente de la Junta Auxiliar de los Reyes, Tzinacapan 25 July 1883 and doc. 64, Presidente Municipal Miguel Calderón to Presidente de Tzinacapan, Cuetzalan 16 June 1883; box 31, Presidencia, doc. 17, 'Exp. no. 7. Expediente de comunicaciones dirigidas a esta oficina, relativas a la vecindad que varios individuos solicitan en los pueblos vecinos', Tzinacapan 17 May 1884; box 36, Presidencia, doc. 18, 'Libro de Sesiones de la Junta Auxiliar de Tzinacapan para el año de 1887', entry for 1 Aug 1887.

<sup>71</sup> See, for instance, AMC, box 17, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 105. No se permite que el C. Gabriel de los Reyes de esta vecindad quede suscrito en el libro de matrícula de la escuela de Xocoyolo su niño Amado', Oct 1883.

<sup>72</sup> AMC, box 21, 'Noticia formada en la Secretaría del Ayuntamiento de Cuetzalan', Cuetzalan 4 Aug 1885.

<sup>73</sup> AMC, box 25, 'Exp. no. 15. Relativo a la circular LII relativa a la boleta de estadística de instrucción pública', July 1887.

<sup>74</sup> AMC, box 27, 'Exp. no. 9. Relativo a la queja que interpuso el C Francisco Piña, contra el Presidente de la Junta Auxiliar de Tzicuilan, porque no se le quiso proporcionar un mayor para ir a Zacatipan', 4 Jan 1888.

was far from steady.<sup>75</sup> Thus the relative success of the district and municipal authorities in keeping the school open and achieving some attendance among a reluctant population was qualified first by the fact that the majority of children remained unschooled and second by their irregular attendance. The villagers of Zacatipan did not get rid of the school or escape the pressure of the authorities to increase registration and attendance. But neither did they feel compelled to send their children to school. Given the small numbers, it is likely that only those who were really interested sent their children to school. As will be seen in what follows, the authorities themselves appeared to accept that universal education was a chimera or simply unnecessary. Their attitudes and actions reinforce the hypothesis that in practice schooling ended up being voluntary rather than compulsory.

#### The Nahua President's Stance on Compulsory Education

Once children were registered in school, failure to attend would result in their parents being fined. While teachers in Cuetzalan sent their attendance lists regularly to the local authorities, the latter did not always take immediate action. Evidence suggests that fines were levied and paid in most but not all cases. An incident in 1884 shows that municipal officials and teachers could be divided with regard to fine enforcement.

The 1884 episode was triggered by a letter from Cuetzalan's schoolmaster, Miguel Arriaga, to the *jefe político* Braulio Alcántara. Arriaga complained that as

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<sup>75</sup> See, for instance, AMC, box 37, 'Exp. no. 31. Relativo a las actas de visitas de las escuelas publicas

soon as the *jefe*'s official visit to Cuetzalan was over, the 'children of the indigenous class' stopped attending. When consulted on the matter, the Nahuatl municipal president and former agrarian rebel Francisco Agustín Dieguillo reported that he had not received any complaints of absenteeism and in fact he could attest that many indigenous children were attending. He nonetheless added that the *jefes de sección*, who, as we have seen in the previous section, were in charge of censuses and tax collection, were taking measures against absenteeism. In a second letter some weeks later, Arriaga informed the *jefe político* that he had attended a meeting at Cuetzalan's council to present the regulations for the board of school inspection (*consejo de vigilancia*). They prescribed that a list of absentee children be forwarded monthly to the district authority followed by the imposition of fines to parents. According to Arriaga, Francisco Agustín asked him to retain the lists rather than send them, thus preventing parents from being fined, while he vowed to make all efforts to increase attendance. Arriaga spoke to *jefe de sección* Luis Ortega, who was the inspector in charge of census-taking and fine-collection. Ortega informed him that Francisco Agustín did not want parents to be fined and actually prevented him from carrying out his duty. Arriaga finished his letter by concluding that 'neither the municipal council, nor the auxiliary board of school inspection in Cuetzalan, nor the *jefe de sección* fulfill their duties and only those children who are voluntarily sent by their parents are actually attending school'.<sup>76</sup>

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de la municipalidad', 17 Feb and 30 July 1891.

<sup>76</sup> AMC, box 19, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 109. El preceptor de la Escuela Juárez de esta Villa se queja que no concurren con la debida puntualidad los alumnos matriculados', Aug-Sep 1884.



While Francisco Agustín denied these charges and accused Arriaga in turn of discrediting the authorities on false grounds, it is possible that he preferred to encourage parents to send their children to school by less coercive means, such as persuasion, rather than more onerous legal measures such as fines. In fact, evidence suggests reluctance to enforce fines was not uncommon.<sup>77</sup> Additionally, as will be seen later, school statistics and reports for the period show that very few Indian children attended the school at Cuetzalan, suggesting that Arriaga's complaint was fair.

Francisco Agustín could speak and write Spanish and such skills were useful in his political life. He probably valued literacy as a desirable skill but it does not necessarily follow that he believed in universal compulsory education. Porfirian Cuetzalan still had a limited demand for literate people. If only a few learned enough to carry out the town administration, staff the school and the band, and hire a city lawyer to pursue litigation, the municipality's needs would be covered.<sup>78</sup> Whether Francisco Agustín sympathised with the need for child labour in the peasant economy, respected the view that there was no need for universal literacy or, being bilingual and literate, preferred to remain a minority out of self-interest, he probably favoured a situation where, as described by Arriaga, parents sent their children to

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<sup>77</sup> See also list of absentees (all Indian children without a surname) in AMC, box 10, Instrucción Pública, 'Lista de faltas de los 91 alumnos de la Escuela Juárez' Miguel Calderón to Miguel Arrieta, Cuetzalan 31 Jan 1880.

<sup>78</sup> For the strategy of selective literacy see Elsie Rockwell, 'Keys to Appropriation: Rural Schooling in Mexico' in B. Levinson, D. Foley and D. Holland (eds.), *The Cultural Production of the Educated Person: Critical Ethnographies of Schooling and Local Practice* (New York: Suny Press, 1996).

school voluntarily.<sup>79</sup> But such preferences were not something to express in official correspondence. District authorities were demanding adherence to a liberal legislation that sought to radically transform the rural world through a variety of means including compulsory, universal education.

### School Provision and the Patterns of Ethnic and Gender Distribution

Despite the reluctance of most parents to school their children, and the concessions of authorities who adapted to local preferences, a network of schools developed in the region. From the 1870s all municipal seats in the districts of Zacatlán, Zacapoaxtla and Tetela had a boys' and a girls' school. Schools in the district seat were the best equipped and had the more educated teachers, followed, sometimes closely, by the most prosperous municipal seats. Down the administrative scale the situation worsened but schools in pueblos were generally much stronger than those in barrios. All pueblos had boys' schools and towards the end of the century a good number of them opened girls' schools as well. Some barrios had mixed schools.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Further evidence of flexibility from the authorities comes from Tzinacapan, where authorities were reported not to take measures against absenteeism, AMC, box 80, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 3. Relativo a las visitas que se practican a las escuelas del municipio', Cuetzalan 28 Feb 1903.

<sup>80</sup> For Tetela see ASMTz, box 48, Instrucción Pública, doc. 116, 'Escuelas visitadas por la inspección de instrucción primaria del estado', Villa de Libres, 12 Sep 1894. For Zacapoaxtla (where all of its 11 barrios had boys' schools) see AMZx, box 40, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 85. Expediente relativo a la circular que previene se produzca una noticia acerca de la educación primaria', Zacapoaxtla 17 Oct 1877 and box 30-E, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 40. Noticia sobre poblaciones de más de 400 habitantes y escuelas establecidas en ellas', Zacapoaxtla 4 Sep 1909. For Zacatlán see Chapter Three.

In 1874 the municipality of Cuetzalan had five schools for boys, one in the municipal seat and in each of its four pueblos, as well as a girls' school in the *cabecera*.<sup>81</sup> The number of pupils in Cuetzalan was far from the ideal of universal education. In 1881, a total of 352 children were registered in the municipality's six schools, including 42 girls in the municipal seat. According to the local school census this registration represented 28 per cent of all school-age children. But if we consider, as has been discussed above, that the local census 'hid' about half of the children, it is likely that registration was in fact about 14 per cent of the total number of the school-age population. The figure for girls was considerably lower, between 4 and 7 per cent, depending on whether we follow the national or the local census.<sup>82</sup>

Clearly, only a small minority were schooled. But did they come mainly from Cuetzalan's dominant non-Indian elite or were Nahuas attending too, especially after 1877 when the Nahuatl leader Francisco Agustín Dieguillo took over the presidency? An examination of students' lists and school reports allows us to identify whether it was Indian or non-Indian children who attended school. As will be seen below, a clear pattern emerges in which most pupils in the *cabecera* were non-Indian (despite the majority Indian population and the leadership of Francisco Agustín) while the vast majority of boys attending schools in the pueblos were Nahuatl.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> AMC, box 3, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 7. La Jefatura Política pide una noticia de los establecimientos de educación primaria', April 1874; box 5, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 35. Contiene el estado que guardan los establecimientos de primeras letras en los pueblos de este municipio', July 1875.

<sup>82</sup> See Table 6 in Appendix Two.

<sup>83</sup> Xocoyolo, an entirely mestizo pueblo, was the one exception.

When a commission of *gente de razón*, including future municipal president Jesús Flores, compiled a report on schools in June 1877, they found satisfactory figures for the central schools in Cuetzalan: 107 boys and 60 girls attended regularly. However, they were mostly non-Indian pupils. The commission remarked that children 'of the indigenous class' rarely attended schools in the municipal seat. When the *jefe político* visited Cuetzalan, only a month later, he confirmed the report given by the municipal authorities that only non-Indian children attended the schools in the *cabecera*.<sup>84</sup> Further reports in the 1880s and 1890s continue to state that none or very few Nahuatl children went to the central schools in Cuetzalan.<sup>85</sup> This suggests that the complaints of teacher Arriaga with regard to Indian absenteeism (outlined in the previous section) were accurate in spite of the dismissals of municipal president Francisco Agustín Dieguillo.

Indeed the lists of school attendance and examinations for the central schools show Indian children in a minority, thus confirming the reports of observers. That this was not due to an ingrained Indian aversion to school is shown by the fact that in the

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<sup>84</sup> AMC, box 7, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia sobre establecimientos de educación primaria', Cuetzalan 4 June 1877. AMZx, box 41, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 115. Expediente relativo a la visita constitucional practicada a la municipalidad de Cuetzalan por el jefe político', July 1877.

<sup>85</sup> AMC, box 12, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 15. El Jefe Político previene que el día 1 de febrero deberán abrirse las clases', Jan 1881; box 19, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 109. El preceptor de la Escuela Juárez de esta Villa se queja que no concurren con la debida puntualidad los alumnos matriculados', Aug 1884; box 46, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 129. Relativo a los informes que dio el Inspector C. Antonio Vela, de la visita que practicó a las escuelas públicas', 18 Aug 1894; box 67, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 32. Relativo a los informes que dio el visitador Francisco Cortés, al practicar su visita a las escuelas públicas del municipio', May 1899.

pueblos (except for mestizo Xocoyolo) practically all pupils were Nahuatl.<sup>86</sup> Anthropologists have observed that Indian pueblos have acted as 'regions of refuge', where the Indian population has sheltered itself from non-Indian influence. Indeed, Indian children were far more likely to be schooled in Cuetzalan's Nahuatl pueblos than in the headtown, where Indians were still a considerable majority. The fact that the pueblos collected and administered their own Chicontepec tax and inspected the school probably made it easier for at least a few of them to see the school as a benefit for the community, in educating children, or otherwise in showing a status of civility.

That pueblos were a more favourable arena for Indian education than other localities is confirmed by comparison with the barrios. While the boys' school in San Miguel Tzinacapan was open throughout the Porfiriato and a new girl's school began to run in the 1890s, the Nahuatl barrios of the municipality of Zacapoaxtla suffered frequent closures due to lack of funds. The problem lay in the lack of autonomy of the barrios to administer their own affairs.<sup>87</sup> The barrios did not have their own council formed by an auxiliary mayor or president and aldermen as pueblos did. Their only authority was a justice of the peace, sometimes aided by a secretary or scribe. In contrast to pueblos, they did not administer their own Chicontepec tax. Instead all funds went to the city of Zacapoaxtla which was in charge of redistributing them. Barrios' discontent with the redistribution often translated into widespread resistance

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<sup>86</sup> See, for instance, AMC box 12, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 33. Se pide de la Jefatura unas listas de niños y niñas de la edad de 6 a 12 años existentes en los pueblos que forman el municipio para cumplir con el art. 10. del Reglamento de Instrucción Primaria', Feb 1881 and box 34, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 20. Relativo a los exámenes de las escuelas del año próximo pasado', 20 Jan 1890.

<sup>87</sup> For the case of the barrios in the municipality of Xochiapulco, southeast of Zacapoaxtla, see Florencia Mallon, *Peasants and Nation*, pp. 290-92.

to tax collection. By contrast, in San Miguel Tzinacapan, when the disturbances of 1875 were over, collection was regular, just as it was in the rest of Cuetzalan.<sup>88</sup> Thus comparison with the barrios suggests that the pueblo's autonomy resulted in better educational provision.

However, the autonomy of Cuetzalan's pueblos is in itself insufficient to explain differences between them. The larger and richer pueblos of San Miguel Tzinacapan and San Andrés Tzicuilan possessed schools which were housed in better buildings and had better attendance than those of Xocoyolo and Yancuitlalpan.<sup>89</sup> They were the only two pueblos to possess girls' schools, which opened in the 1890s.<sup>90</sup> And they also paid their teacher higher salaries.<sup>91</sup> For their part, Xocoyolo and Santiago Yancuitlalpan shared some common traits, even though the first was mestizo and the latter was Nahua. These had the smallest populations in the

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<sup>88</sup> AMZx, box 39, 'Exp. no. 1176. Relativo a las disposiciones que para fomentar el ramo de Instrucción Pública de esta ciudad acuerda el Patriótico Ayuntamiento', 2 May 1876 and box 45, 'Exp. no. 56. Relativo al cobro de la Contribución de Chicontepec, mejoramiento y fomento de los establecimientos de instrucción primaria', June 1877. AMC, box 5, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 53. Contiene la visita oficial que practicó el jefe político Miguel Arriaga', Cuetzalan 19 Feb 1875.

<sup>89</sup> AMC, box 5, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 35. Contiene el estado que guardan los establecimientos de primeras letras en los pueblos de este municipio', July 1875.

<sup>90</sup> The first reference to the girls' school in San Miguel Tzinacapan is ASMTz, box 42, Instrucción Pública, doc. 89, 'Nómina de los sueldos ministrados a los empleados del fondo de Instrucción Pública por la Tesorería Municipal', Recibo de la directora de la Escuela Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez, Srta Luz Becerra, por \$ 7.50, Tzinacapan 31 Dec 1890. The school in Tzinacapan was later named Carmen Romero Rubio after Porfirio Díaz's wife. The first reference available for the girls' school in San Andrés Tzicuilan (under the name *Amiga de Niñas Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez*) is AMC, box 39, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia sobre instrucción primaria de esta municipalidad correspondiente al mes de Noviembre de 1892'.

municipality, oscillating between 500 and 900 in the period studied, and their public instruction funds were accordingly more meagre.<sup>92</sup> This suggests that the poorer schooling of Xocoyolo and Yancuitlalpan was a result of economic rather than any ethnic factors.

Yet, there were also differences between the two largest and richest pueblos. The 1877 commission visiting schools reported that the pueblos of Xocoyolo, Yancuitlalpan and San Andrés Tzicuilan all had very low attendance, a dozen pupils at the most. Only the boys' school in San Miguel Tzinacapan had significant attendance with 60 children. Tzinacapan's villagers were reported as exceptionally interested in education and praised for their dedication to the school, while Tzicuilan was criticised for its 'abandonment' of education.<sup>93</sup> In fact, San Andrés Tzicuilan's attendance throughout the Porfiriato was very irregular and its figures were systematically lower than in Tzinacapan, despite the fact that the two pueblos had similar populations and Tzicuilan's land was in fact more fertile.<sup>94</sup> The difference between Tzinacapan and Tzicuilan is largely explained by their very different relation to the *cabecera* and Tzicuilan's much tenser relations with non-Indians.

Only three months before the 1877 Cuetzalan report on education was penned by the local non-Indian notables, Francisco Agustín Dieguillo and his followers in

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<sup>91</sup> However, pueblo teachers who were also council secretaries doubled their salary. AMC, box 5, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia del número de escuelas que existen en esta cabecera municipal', Cuetzalan 23 Sep 1875.

<sup>92</sup> AMC, box 3, Presidencia, Presidente Auxiliar to Presidente Municipal de Cuetzalan, Xocoyolo 17 Nov 1873.

<sup>93</sup> AMC, box 7, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia sobre establecimientos de educación primaria', Cuetzalan 4 June 1877.

<sup>94</sup> For registration and attendance figures see Tables 8 to 10 in Appendix Two.

San Andrés Tzicuilan were petitioning the government. They demanded the reversal of the authorities' decision to concede the adjudication of Cuetzalan's communal lands to non-Indians, and to reduce the excessive fees demanded of Nahuas for the adjudication of small plots of land, as well as the end of abuses by *gente de razón* and parish priests, who still demanded the compulsory personal services of colonial times.<sup>95</sup> Thus, while non-Indian officials were visiting schools and reporting their findings, a good part of the Nahua population was more concerned with guaranteeing their autonomy and livelihood. There was little incentive for the parents of Cuetzalan and San Andrés Tzicuilan to send their children to the schools supervised by the non-Indian authorities. The figure of nine pupils for Tzicuilan in 1877 is thus unsurprising.

By contrast, San Miguel Tzinacapan had not joined Dieguillo's rebellions or petitions and after the resolution of the 1875 conflict, did not seem to have any conflicts with municipal or district authorities. The non-Indian Cuetzaltecos must have been pleased with Tzinacapan's attitude. The fact that their schools fared better suggests that the Nahua population of Tzinacapan found the non-Indian's encroachment undesirable but tolerable. In their eyes, a non-Indian secretary was less unsettling than ambitious land-grabbers and traders. The less tense inter-ethnic relations in Tzinacapan resulted in greater school attendance.

Figures for the rest of the Porfiriato confirm the positive observations about San Miguel Tzinacapan made by non-Indian officials in the 1877 report. The boys' school, with an average of 80 children attending between 1876 and 1908, recorded

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<sup>95</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan', pp. 245-249.



much higher figures than any other pueblo school. It fared well by comparison with the better equipped school of the municipal seat which, in spite of a school-age population which was three and a half times bigger, had an average of only 91 pupils registered and 65 attending. The municipal seat's figures were even lower after private schools were opened.<sup>96</sup>

In sum, it was in Tzinacapan that an Indian boy of the municipality of Cuetzalan had the greatest chance of attending school. Additionally, Tzinacapan's collection of Chicontepec taxes not only allowed for a greater number of Nahua children to be schooled than anywhere else but also sustained the best-attended secular, municipal school, whether Indian or non-Indian. But before we can fully assess the impact of the relative strength of schooling in Tzinacapan, we need to take a closer look at what went on in the classroom. What did children learn? And was this useful for themselves or the community?

### San Miguel Tzinacapan: the Simulation of Reading

When the attendance and exam results of San Miguel Tzinacapan were satisfactory, the exam jury would congratulate the schoolmaster for having overcome the difficulties of teaching Indian children. But they rarely mentioned what the specific problems were. The 1891 exam jury, for instance, simply found that there was a special merit in obtaining good results at a school where 'most pupils are of the

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<sup>96</sup> For municipal boys' school figures see Tables 7 and 8 in Appendix Two. Private Catholic schools opened from 1880. AMC, box 10, Instrucción Pública, Pascuala Zavaleta to Municipal President, Cuetzalan 17 March 1880.

Indian race, who sees instruction as a yoke imposed upon them'.<sup>97</sup> Thus the authorities' praise for Tzinacapan's support of education in 1877, and the fact that its school boasted the best attendance in the municipality, did not stop the exam jury in 1891 from reproducing common place beliefs that Indians were hostile to education. But if there was no objective reason to see Tzinacapan as more resilient than Cuetzalan or mestizo Xocoyolo, pupils still faced the language barrier.

School lessons, entirely in Spanish, did not take into account the fact that Indian children generally spoke only native languages. In their zeal for formal equality before the law, the liberal legislation and regulations made no recognition of the fact that children would need to learn Spanish. Education committees, inspectors and teachers were not encouraged to observe or remedy language problems, nor to register them, thus leaving few traces for the historian. For instance, inspector reports only made oblique and infrequent references to language problems, while they discussed the hygienic conditions of school buildings at length. Teachers facing an entirely Indian classroom or mixed Spanish and Nahuatl<sup>98</sup> speaking classrooms were left to their own devices as to the teaching of Spanish. All teachers at the time had

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<sup>97</sup> AMC, box 39, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 6. Relativo a las actas de los exámenes que se verificaron en Diciembre de 1891. 15 Jan 1892', Acta de la Escuela Zaragoza 7 Dec 1891. AMC, box 42, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 21. Relativo a las actas de exámenes de las escuelas del municipio, correspondientes a Diciembre anterior', 15 Jan 1893.

<sup>98</sup> The variant of Nahuatl spoken in the district of Zacapoaxtla, and more generally in the north west of Puebla is called Nahuatl, while the variant spoken in the centre of the country, for instance in Tlaxcala, is called Náhuatl. One of the differences between them, as the name indicates, is that in Nahuatl letter 't' is never followed by 'l'. Vicente Lombardo Toledano, *Geografía de las lenguas de la Sierra de Puebla* in Lombardo Toledano, *Escritos acerca de la situación de los indígenas* (México: SEP-Centro de Estudios Filosóficos, Políticos y Sociales VLT, 1991), p. 68. 'Presentación' in Eduardo Almeida Acosta y María Eugenia Sánchez Díaz (coords.) *Conocimiento y Acción en Tzinacapan*, p. 7.

Spanish as their mother tongue; some of them understood and more or less spoke Nahuatl, some did not. Those who knew Nahuatl could have used it in the classroom but we can only speculate as to how much they did. Was it the main language for communication between teachers and pupils? Or was it only used exceptionally when it was completely unavoidable? For early twentieth-century Tlaxcala, Elsie Rockwell found this depended entirely on the teacher. For instance, María Calderón, who came from a mixed Spanish-Indian marriage and was a graduate teacher, would not allow students to speak Nahuatl and scolded them when they spoke Spanish with an Indian accent. Rockwell concluded that this Tlaxcalan teacher probably used the native language she had learned from her mother at home to communicate with some students but nevertheless discouraged its use during formal lessons.<sup>99</sup> Similar attitudes were probably found in San Miguel Tzinacapan.

Practically all pupils attending school in San Miguel Tzinacapan were children of Nahua parents. They spoke the indigenous language at home and would have had very few opportunities to listen to Spanish in their village. Adult males encountered and used Spanish when liaising with the village secretary or authorities in Cuetzalan as well as in their dealings with mestizo traders who bought their agricultural produce, while children first encountered Spanish in school.<sup>100</sup> Whether the transition from the Nahua household to the Spanish school was more or less

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<sup>99</sup> Elsie Rockwell, 'Learning for Life or Learning from books: Reading practices in Mexican Rural Schools (1900-1935)', *Pedagogica Historica* (38):1, p. 8. Rossana Podestá, *Funciones de la escuela en la cultura oral nahuatlaca* (México: SEP, 2000), pp. 76-79.

<sup>100</sup> Isauro Chávez Tomás, 'El bilingüismo en San Miguel Tzinacapan' in Eduardo Almeida Acosta y María Eugenia Sánchez Díaz (coords.) *Conocimiento y Acción en Tzinacapan*. Rossana Podestá, *Funciones de la escuela*, p. 21, 59, 61.

abrupt for children would depend to a great extent on the teacher. During the period of study all San Miguel Tzinacapan's teachers were '*gente de razón*' with Spanish as their first language. Until 1882 they were also the village secretaries. Long-time secretary and schoolmaster of Tzinacapan, Serapio Galicia, spoke Nahuatl but it is not known to what level. In any case, no trace was left of the language problems which Serapio Galicia might have encountered. It is not until 1891 that documentation provides us with some clues, thanks to an incident between the teacher and the secretary of Tzinacapan.

From the late 1880s Agustín Becerra was schoolmaster at the boys' school. He was frequently praised for positive exam results, and local authorities in Cuetzalan and Tzinacapan approved of his work.<sup>101</sup> However, in 1891, an observation registered in the council minutes stirred controversy. Secretary José María Hernández recorded the comments made by the alderman in charge of education after his visit to the boys' school:

The alderman would like to draw the attention of the council to the fact that the Spanish language is not taught at the Zaragoza school. Pupils must learn Spanish to be able to understand what they read. Otherwise it will not make a difference to them whether they read a book in French, Latin, German or any other language that they cannot translate, just as they cannot translate Spanish. He proposes that the council take the necessary measures so that instruction and learning is a reality and not a mere formula. The council recommends, once more, that the schoolmaster rectify the deficiencies observed, so that his

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<sup>101</sup> For approval from the authorities of Tzinacapan see, for instance, ASMTz, box 39, Presidencia, 'Libro de Actas y Acuerdos de la Junta Auxiliar de San Miguel Tzinacapan para el año de 1889', entries for 4 and 25 June, 23 Aug 1889. For approval from Cuetzalan, see AMC, box 34, 'Exp. no. 20. Relativo a las actas de exámenes de las escuelas', 20 Jan 1890 and 'Exp. no. 82. Expediente en que constan las actas de las visitas de las escuelas', 31 July 1890.

pupils learn the Spanish language, all the more important because it is the national language.<sup>102</sup>

The claim made that children read Spanish without understanding the words was denied by teacher Agustín Becerra. Becerra additionally accused Hernández of making up the minutes, and tricking the illiterate Nahua authorities into signing them, in order to harm the teacher's reputation. However, several facts suggest that the description of the problems faced in the classroom was not merely a ploy of Hernández to discredit Becerra.<sup>103</sup> First, the minutes did not actually condemn the teachers' methods, they merely pointed to weaknesses and recommended improvements and, in fact, no action was taken against teacher Becerra. Additionally, Hernández's experience as teacher-secretary, his participation in school vigilance and especially his comments upon a later visit to Tzinacapan as alderman of Cuetzalan, confirm he was aware of, and concerned with, Indian children's lack of knowledge of Spanish.<sup>104</sup> Most importantly, there is revealing evidence that reading without understanding was a not uncommon practice in Indian pueblos. This has been identified for the Malintzi region in Tlaxcala and we also find it in scattered remarks

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<sup>102</sup> ASMTz, box 40, Presidencia, 'Libro de Actas y Acuerdos de la Junta Auxiliar de San Miguel Tzinacapan para el año de 1891', entry for 30 June 1891.

<sup>103</sup> Teachers and secretaries, who were part of a small literate minority with administrative skills ASMTz, box 40, Presidencia, 'Libro de Actas y Acuerdos de la Junta Auxiliar de San Miguel Tzinacapan para el año de 1891', entry for 15 Dec 1891.

<sup>104</sup> For his appointment as teacher and secretary of Tzicuilan see AMC, box 10, Presidencia, Juan B. Pérez to Presidente Municipal de Cuetzalan, Tzicuilan 2 Feb 1880. For his visits to Tzinacapan, concern for education and remarks on language see AMC, box 80, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 31. Relativo a las visitas que se practican a las escuelas del municipio', see especially the reports for 31

by teachers and authorities in the Sierra Norte de Puebla. I first consider the cases in Puebla and then the findings for Tlaxcala.

One of the few occasions when teachers registered the difficulties encountered in the classroom was the writing of the school chronicle (*crónica de escuela* or *reseña histórica*) that they read aloud during the yearly public examinations. Some details should be given on the organisation of these exams. First they all took place in the central school buildings of the municipal capital. Later in the Porfiriato, pueblos and barrios were allowed to have examinations in their own school building, provided the jury was able to travel to the location. We know that parents could be present but there are no records indicating whether they actually were. Pupils were questioned individually throughout the day, from 9 am to 12 noon and from 3 to 6 pm. The exam jury was appointed by either the *consejo de vigilancia* or the conference of teachers. It was presided by the *jefe político* in the central schools in Zacapoaxtla and by the municipal alderman in charge of education in all other schools. There was clearly a lot of pressure on teacher and pupils to put in a good performance. Pressure increased in the case of barrios and pueblos, where not only teachers but also local authorities would have been anxious to show good results in front of the higher authorities. The examination commenced with the reading of the school chronicle by the teacher.<sup>105</sup>

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Jan, 28 Feb, 30 April 1903 and ASMTz, box 68, Presidencia, José María Hernández to Silverio Mora, Cuetzalan 3 March 1903.

<sup>105</sup> AMC, box 12, 'Bases bajo las cuales terminará el año escolar de 1881', Pedro de la Cueva Morlet, Zacapoaxtla 30 Sep 1881 and box 14, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 109. Contiene las bases aprobadas por el Consejo de Vigilancia bajo las cuales terminarán el presente año escolar las escuelas del mismo', Zacapoaxtla 12 Oct 1882. For a typical exam report, see AMC, box 28, Instrucción Pública, 'Escuela Juárez. Estado de Examen', 1 Dec 1888; 'Acta de Examen y Estado de Examen de la Amiga Constancia', Cuetzalan 1 and 3 Dec 1888.

Typically, the *crónica de escuela* or *reseña histórica* did not give a historical account of the origins and development of the village school, as its name may suggest. Instead, it considered the material conditions under which the school had functioned during the year. For the most part, teachers elaborated on the obstacles faced in the running of the school in order to justify the possible deficiencies which juries were about to observe when assessing the pupils. On one such occasion in Zacapoaxtla, the mestizo teacher of the Indian barrio of Tatoxcac pointed out three main obstacles: the school had been open for a short time; the building was in bad condition; and he had to face the 'very grave problem of the children's language'.<sup>106</sup> In the nearby barrio of Tahitic, the teacher referred to a series of difficulties faced by indigenous village schools, including language problems. His brief explanation of the consequences of children's lack of knowledge of Spanish gives us further evidence that the simulation of reading among Indian children might have been widespread:

[...] To these difficulties we must add the lack of knowledge of the Spanish language and we will realise that the obstacles [faced in indigenous villages] will only be overcome in the long term, provided we work very hard. An indigenous child will read and recite his lessons, word by word, without having understood the meaning of the sentences he has pronounced.<sup>107</sup>

The teachers' remarks reveal that children were learning to read Spanish and to spout their lessons by heart without understanding the language. Such ability allowed for a good performance in the classroom and in front of an exam jury and the authorities in

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<sup>106</sup> AMZx, box 46, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 18. Volumen que contiene las colecciones de planas escritas por los alumnos de las escuelas de esta municipalidad y las alocuciones históricas del periodo de enseñanza, leídas por los respectivos preceptores de los barrios de esta cabecera', Tatoxcac, Dec 1879.

<sup>107</sup> AMZx, box 46, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 18. Volumen que contiene...', Tahitic, Dec 1879.

public exams. Children could read from a given text. They could also respond to questions the formulation of which they had previously memorised, just as they learned the right answer by rote. Indeed, exam regulations designed to prevent teachers from training children to answer specific questions they would be asked during the test, suggest that memorising of questions and answers occurred.<sup>108</sup> Therefore, reading and reciting, even without understanding the words pronounced, might have been sufficient to pass exams. The ability to read Spanish, regardless of comprehension, also allowed children to give speeches in the popular civic ceremonies.<sup>109</sup> The Spanish-speaking teacher wrote the speech and the Nahua child could simply read it in public by pronouncing the words. Thus the practices of reading aloud and rote learning favoured the simulation of reading and learning, more generally, so long as children were not asked to explain the meaning of what they had just read. Public opinion and reputation, political pressures and rivalries might have encouraged some teachers to put up a show during the public examinations and patriotic festivals. If children left school with the capacity to read but before they really understood the Spanish language, they would find little use for their skill once they had left school and eventually forget how to read. In such circumstances, schools

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<sup>108</sup> AMC, box 43, Instrucción pública, 'Exp. no. 141. Relativo a las bases bajo las cuales terminarán el presente año escolar las escuelas municipales del distrito', Consejo de Vigilancia, Zacapoaxtla 13 Nov 1893, see especially rule no. 5.

<sup>109</sup> On the popularity of civic ceremonies in the nineteenth-century Sierra, see 'Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism: The National Guard, Philharmonic Corps, and Patriotic Juntas in Mexico, 1847-1888', *JLAS* 22 (1989), 31-68. On its adaptation to the objectives of federal schooling in post-revolutionary Puebla see Mary K. Vaughan, 'The construction of patriotic festival in Tecamachalco, Puebla, 1900-1946' in W.H.Beezley, C.E.Martin and W.E.French (eds.), *Rituals of rule, rituals of resistance. Public celebrations and popular culture in Mexico* (Wilmington: SR Books, 1994).



and their public exams were no more than a façade of progress, although, politically, this was a useful façade. Spanish speakers, by contrast, even if they stayed in school for only a couple of years, had a much greater chance of acquiring skills for life. Insofar as education was concerned the liberal state was failing its Indian citizens.

### Language Difficulties in the Girls' School

In order to close this section on pre-revolutionary schools, further language problems will be explored for the case of Tzinacapan's girls' school. This case shows that in addition to the problem of pupils' monolingualism, pueblo schools sometimes suffered from the teacher's ignorance of Indian languages, further hindering pupils' progress by obstructing communication. Although the language question is the main purpose of this section, a brief reflection on female education is included.

As seen in the first part of this chapter, in response to an order from higher authorities, the municipal president of Cuetzalan put pressure on the pueblos to open girls' schools. The systematically and significantly lower registration and attendance figures for girls, compared to boys, suggests that the quantitatively modest, but qualitatively important, achievements in female schooling were a result more of the authorities' insistence than of a strong demand from society. Moreover, the fact that the Nahua president of Tzinacapan, when prompted to open a girls' school by the municipal president in 1875, presumed that this would be for non-Indian girls only, suggests that patriarchal relations among Indians could be even stronger than among non-Indians. Still, when Tzinacapan's girls' school opened in 1890, most of its pupils

were Nahua girls. Attendance rose from a dozen to around 20 pupils in the 1900s and 30 in the 1910s. Once their parents had decided to send them to school, however, other obstacles complicated girls' schooling. I will now look at the problems faced at the girls' school in 1895, which further underlines language difficulties that potentially affected male and female students alike.

The girls' school in Tzinacapan, named after Independence heroine Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez (and later after Porfirio Díaz's wife, Carmen Romero Rubio), was directed by María Luque, a non-Indian woman who did not understand the Nahuatl language. The schoolbuilding was in such a sorry state that upon his visit in June 1895, Inspector Antonio Vela recommended that the girls' school be moved to the room used by the village band for its rehearsals. Vela further observed that school materials were insufficient. The report additionally specified the number of school-age girls in the pueblo, recording the disingenuously low figure of 35. Only 12 girls were registered and all attended the beginners' grade (*curso inferior*). But if the material conditions of the school and the low registration did not augur well for Tzinacapan's female education, the school was already facing other, more serious problems.<sup>110</sup>

In March, parents' complaints accumulated, including protests that the teacher's discipline was excessive and that she used corporal punishment frequently. At least one parent complained that Luque was demanding her daughter must take materials for the sewing class, an expense that the family could not afford. María Luque received warnings from the auxiliary president of Tzinacapan, who

demonstrated good knowledge of the small print of educational legislation and the Constitution. He reminded her that the Constitution prohibited corporal punishment and that the Puebla school regulations and further state circulars specified that school materials were only demanded of children when it was absolutely evident that their parents could afford them. In her response, the teacher simply denied the accusations.<sup>111</sup>

By the beginning of May only three girls were attending the school. The Tzinacapan council decided to investigate the situation. Parents produced a series of complaints disapproving of the teacher's excessive punishments. Hands and even heads were caned, ears pulled, faces slapped and girls dragged along the school's floor for offences such as being unable to write, failing to produce fabric for the sewing class, or even losing a game. Even if parents may have embellished their accounts with details of the teacher's cruelty in order to justify their children's absenteeism, it was clear that María Luque's conduct was far from satisfactory. One parent who presumably expected her child to learn to read and write explained that she saw no point in sending her daughter to school because the director only used her to learn *mejicano* (Nahuatl), so the girl was only wasting her time. The Tzinacapan aldermen in charge of visiting the school further protested that Luque reprimanded them for no reason, whenever they visited, and even threatened with giving them a

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<sup>110</sup> ASMTz, box 50, Instrucción Pública, doc. 206, Aparicio Calderón to Presidente de Tzinacapan, Cuetzalan 25 June 1895

<sup>111</sup> ASMTz, box 50, Instrucción Pública, doc 120, 'Exp. no. 40. Relativo a que la directora de la Escuela Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez trate con cariño paternal a sus alumnas, que la Constitución prohíbe el azote', 15 March 1895; doc. 224, Acta del reconocimiento en la escuela de niñas,

beating. The Tzinacapan authorities concluded that María Luque's absurdly inappropriate behaviour was a result of feeling out of control because she did not understand Nahuatl.<sup>112</sup>

While Luque certainly faced a tall order teaching children who did not understand her and whom she could not understand, with little resources or materials, her violent response was clearly inadequate. These experiences could only alienate parents and children from schools, and yet little was done to address the language problem. Such neglect meant that the pueblo's efforts to sustain schools through the Chicontepec tax saw few rewards in terms of both male and female literacy. It is not until the 1900s that we finally find a practical response, however insufficient, to try and overcome language difficulties. Through the report of Inspector Felipe Franco, we learn that by 1907 the girls' school in Tzinacapan, directed by a new teacher, distributed groups so that girls who did not know Spanish were concentrated in the first section of the beginners' course in order to learn the language. Presumably, children in the second section already understood some Spanish. The inspector approved of the measure since 'the majority of the girls are indigenous and they have great difficulty in understanding and expressing themselves correctly in Spanish'. Franco's report is significant for its acknowledgement of the language problem but it additionally demonstrates that some efforts were being made to instruct Nahua girls

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Tzinacapan 12 June 1895. *Reglamento Económico de las Escuelas Primarias Elementales del Estado de Puebla* (Puebla: Imprenta de la Escuela de Artes y Oficios, 1894).

<sup>112</sup> ASMTz, box 50, Instrucción Pública, doc. 185, 'Exp. no. 85. Relativo a la licencia que pide la directora para no dar clase el día de hoy por ser la asistencia de las niñas de tres', 3 May 1895; doc. 117, 'Exp. no. 41. Relativo al informe que dan los padres de familia por el mal trato que reciben en la escuela Josefa Ortíz' 15 May 1895.

in the Spanish language and the three Rs, as well as other subjects in the elementary school curriculum, including basic introductions to the natural sciences, history and *civismo*.<sup>113</sup> Girls' school programmes were nonetheless different to boys'. Female pupils would additionally learn gender-specific tasks such as sewing, and there is no doubt that the aims of their education deeply differed from the aims of boys' schooling. The point of educating girls was to enable them to better educate their children and manage the home, according to the modern, rationalist principles guiding schooling.<sup>114</sup> It is nonetheless important to note that such ideas, which were common currency in Porfirian Puebla City, and had resulted in the opening of a Women Teacher Training College and the introduction of the study of domestic economy, were penetrating Indian communities in the Sierra.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> ASMTz, box 79, Presidencia, Inspector Felipe Franco's Report of his visit to the Escuela Carmen Romero Rubio, 15 March 1907.

<sup>114</sup> For a justification of women's education by a male Indian teacher in 1879 Zacapoaxtla see AMZx, box 46, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 18. Volumen que contiene las colecciones de planas escritas por los alumnos de las escuelas de esta municipalidad y las alocuciones históricas del periodo de enseñanza, leídas por los respectivos preceptores de los barrios de esta cabecera', Las Lomas, Dec 1879.

<sup>115</sup> For the opening of Teacher Training Colleges in Puebla see Chapter One. On domestic economy see Leonor Cobos López, *Breve estudio sobre la necesidad de introducir en las escuelas primarias de niñas la enseñanza de la Economía Doméstica. Tesis para el examen profesional de la aspirante al título de Profesora de Instrucción Primaria* (Puebla: Tip. de Jesús Franco, 1895).

## Conclusion

Focusing on the case of San Miguel Tzinacapan, this chapter has shown that non-Indian encroachment upon the administration of Indian pueblos was greatly aided by the secretary's possession of scarce literacy and administrative skills, together with the support from municipal and district authorities. The intervention of the secretary in village affairs was accepted grudgingly by some villagers and tolerated by others. When the secretary obviously overstepped his powers, as he did in Tzinacapan in 1875 by raising the Chicontepec tax, those who reluctantly consented to the secretary's presence saw their opportunity to protest. They managed to stop the tax rise but were ultimately powerless to get rid of the non-Indian secretary. The fact that the protesters were illiterate suggests that in the last instance they would have been unable to put forward their own secretary or develop a more effective leadership to replace the existing administrators.

Second, we have seen how the collection of taxes in Tzinacapan followed customary practices and, despite some protests, it probably continued throughout the Porfiriato, providing the funds necessary for public instruction.<sup>116</sup> Moreover, due to the autonomy it enjoyed as a pueblo and the accommodation reached between Indians and non-Indians, Tzinacapan possessed the best attended boys' school in the municipality. The relative success of its school begs the question: was the school able to produce literate Nahuatl leaders capable of replacing non-Indians as well as the Indian authorities who allied with them? The deficiencies found in the classroom,

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<sup>116</sup> For the effectiveness of Chicontepec see Chapter Four, Section II.

where children often learned to pronounce Spanish words from a text but did not understand the language, suggest that the school provided little opportunity for a literate Nahua leadership to emerge. Indeed, as will be seen in Chapter Five, non-Indian presence in Tzinacapan's council continued, and possibly increased, after the Porfiriato.

To further explore the conflicts and accommodations between Indians and non-Indians, and the impact and limits of education in the Sierra, the next chapter discusses the political situation and the advances of schooling in the municipality of Huehuetla.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Huehuetla During The Porfiriato**

This chapter considers non-Indian encroachment upon land and administration in the municipality of Huehuetla, which occurred at a later date than in Cuetzalan and provoked tensions in the late Porfiriato. During these conflicts, there were various cases in which monolingual and illiterate Totonac authorities and population were dependent on the more educated non-Indians. After presenting these cases, the second section enquires whether the available schools could remedy Indian dependence on non-Indian skills. In contrast to Cuetzalan, in the headtown of Huehuetla there was a majority of Indian pupils. However, the education provided in these schools, as in Cuetzalan, failed to address the language difficulties faced by monolingual Indian children and ultimately widened the skills gap between Indians and non-Indians, furthering the erosion of Totonac autonomy and failing to integrate the population via acquisition of the national language.



## I. Totonac Authorities and Encroaching Mestizos

This section examines the tensions as well as the accommodation reached between non-Indian settlers and Totonacs. It also considers how the newcomers related to Totonac authorities who sometimes allied with them and at other times sought to curb their ambitions or stop their abuses. After outlining the arrival of non-Indians in the headtown of Huehuetla, the case of the pueblo of Caxhuacan is considered. Tense relations between the authorities of Caxhuacan (Indian and non-Indian) and the population resulted in resistance to compulsory services, tax evasion and parents' reluctance to send children to school. The case of Caxhuacan is followed by an assessment of the role of non-Indian authorities in the Huehuetla council and their interaction with Totonac authorities from the beginning of the Porfiriato. Although non-Indian encroachment upon the administration in the 1870s might have suggested ethnic tensions, in the 1890s conflict cut across ethnic lines after the process of *desamortización* was abused by a small number of non-Indians who encountered resistance from Totonacs as well as non-Indian authorities.

Huehuetla is an interesting test case for study of the penetration by non-Indians of Indian communities and the accommodation reached between them. Below I give an account of the changes in the population and government of the municipality of Huehuetla during the Porfiriato after the immigration of non-Indians from the mid-nineteenth century. Before 1881, Huehuetla was a *pueblo sujeto* of the municipality of Olintla. As such, it resented Olintla's rule and sought secession. Despite the

presence of non-Indians at least since 1867, and the granting of municipal status by 1881, all Huehuetla's mayors were Totonac up to 1896. However, evidence suggests that many of the Totonac authorities lacked linguistic and administrative skills. Bilingualism and literacy among Indians in Huehuetla might have been higher than in Cuetzalan, but Totonacs in Huehuetla were nonetheless becoming increasingly dependent on bilingual and literate non-Indians, who took posts as teachers, secretaries, scribes, treasurers, aldermen and judges.

#### Huehuetla: from *Pueblo Sujeto* to Municipality

In 1848, the population of the pueblo of Huehuetla, in the municipality of Olintla, was reported as 'pure Indians who speak Totonac'. This was the case for all the municipalities of the tropical region in the district of Zacatlán, except for Hueytalpan, not far from Huehuetla, where there were already 'a few Creoles' resident among the Totonacs.<sup>1</sup> Despite its remoteness, Huehuetla, as part of the liberal district of Zacatlán, participated in the liberal campaigns of the mid-nineteenth century. Like most communities in the tropical lands of the Sierra, rather than joining the National Guard, Huehuetecos chose to pay the mustering-out tax.<sup>2</sup> They also

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<sup>1</sup> *Noticia Estadística*, Ramón Márquez, 22 abril 1848. Guy Thomson, 'Montaña y Llanura in the politics of Central Mexico', p. 69.

<sup>2</sup> There were a few exceptions: we know of five National Guard soldiers from Huehuetla who deserted in 1876, three of them were non-Indians. Archivo Municipal de Huehuetla (AMH), box 2, Presidencia, Olintla to Huehuetla, 23 June 1876.

provided crucial supplies for the liberal troops, mainly corn chips (*totopo*), brown sugar (*panela*) and salted meat.<sup>3</sup>

By 1867, the year of the liberal triumph against European intervention and the establishment of the Restored Republic, Huehuetla had three non-Indian families registered in the census: Mora, Calleja and Castro. In 1870, the 'National Guard Census', which in Huehuetla registered all men aged 16 to 60 who paid the mustering-out tax (*contribución de rebajados*), listed 386 men, including eleven *gente de razón*.<sup>4</sup> Among them, the majority were dedicated to trade and one was a teacher. These men were probably the first non-Indian settlers and their children would become the first generation of non-Indian Huehuetecos.

Totonac Huehuetecos were not interested in the private ownership of the land which they cultivated. Nor did municipal or district administrators pressure to start the *desamortización* in the mid-nineteenth century. The local census of 1875 reported a total population of 1,863 distributed in 505 households. The number of non-Indian heads of household had not increased since 1870.<sup>5</sup> The presence of non-Indians was small but not insignificant and yet local government remained in the hands of the Totonacs and no disentailment had taken place. Similar to San Miguel Tzinacapan (Cuetzalan), the elected Indian authorities of Huehuetla already coexisted with a non-Indian secretary appointed by Olintla or Zacatlán. In contrast to Tzinacapan, in Huehuetla non-Indians additionally occupied posts as aldermen and began to take up

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<sup>3</sup> Guy Thomson 'Leva o ciudadanía...' in Antonio Escobar (ed.) *Indio, nación y comunidad*.

<sup>4</sup> Interviews with Manuel Lecona, Puebla 20 April 2002 and Huehuetla 18 May 2002. AMH, box 2, Presidencia, 'Padrón de los ciudadanos rebajados de Huehuetla, año 1870', Huehuetla 29 Jan 1870.

<sup>5</sup> AMH, box 2, Presidencia, 'Padrón general que contiene el censo de habitantes de este pueblo de Huehuetla en el año de 1875'.

tasks related to the pueblo's public affairs, such as overseeing the measurement of boundaries with neighbouring pueblos.<sup>6</sup>

By 1881 Huehuetla had acquired the status of municipality and the pueblo of Caxhuacan seceded from Atlequizayán in order to join Huehuetla.<sup>7</sup> The Zacatlán newspaper *El Progreso*, reporting on the progress made in the construction of Huehuetla's town hall and school, remarked that this was the second richest and most populated municipality in the district after Zacatlán.<sup>8</sup> The Indian pueblo of Huehuetla had become a desirable place for non-Indians. Once the town acquired municipal status, an increasing number of non-Indians took posts in the local government such as those of aldermen and judges. Huehuetla was in a period of transition from an Indian-only government to the increasing participation of non-Indians in the council. Yet the mayor was still an Indian, so Huehuetla differed from the more established pueblos and villas, such as Cuetzalan, which already had municipal status in the early to mid-nineteenth century, and where the municipal presidency was occupied by non-Indians. In absolute and relative terms, the non-Indian population of Huehuetla was less significant than that of Cuetzalan. In 1900 Cuetzalan Spanish speakers already

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<sup>6</sup> AMH, box 2, 'Borrador de oficios de este Juzgado para varias autoridades, comensado hoy 16 septiembre 1874 y concluirá el 15 de septiembre de 1875, municipio de Olintla, juzgado de Huehuetla', entry for 2 Aug 1875.

<sup>7</sup> *Constitución del estado libre y soberano de Puebla, reformada conforme a los decretos expedidos por el congreso constitucional en 5 de julio de 1880 y en 30 de septiembre de 1883* (México: Imprenta de Francisco Díaz de León, 1883), Título VI, art. 22, fracc. xxxiv.

<sup>8</sup> 'Mejoras en el distrito' in *El Progreso*, 1 Feb 1881.

represented 37 per cent of a total population of 12,055; while in Huehuetla they only amounted to 12 per cent of a total of 5,478 inhabitants.<sup>9</sup>

In 1897 the first non-Indian municipal president of Huehuetla was appointed. Yet, by the 1920s non-Indian control of government in Huehuetla was still less complete than in Cuetzalan. In the Huehuetla council a number of Indians were appointed as aldermen, working alongside non-Indian officials. Occasionally, a Totonac man, probably one of the more acculturated or Hispanized, was appointed municipal president.

Below, the relations between Indian and non-Indian authorities and the population are examined through an exploration of the problems faced by the administration in Caxhuacan. These problems included insufficient revenue, the evasion of taxes and compulsory education as well as resistance to the provision of labour for public works. The case of Caxhuacan is followed by an account of the role of non-Indian authorities in the headtown of Huehuetla, based on the cases of four non-Indian secretaries, including Federico González, who became the first non-Indian municipal president in 1897.

#### Caxhuacan: the Backwater of the Sierra

Caxhuacan was a pueblo of the municipality of Atlequizayán, which seceded and joined Huehuetla when the latter became municipal seat. It remained a pueblo of the municipality of Huehuetla up to the mid-twentieth century when it acquired

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<sup>9</sup> *Censo General de la República Mexicana verificado el 28 de octubre de 1900. Estado de Puebla*

municipal status. Caxhuacan did not strictly follow the common arrangement of Indian council and non-Indian secretary. We find both Totonacs and non-Indians in the different elected posts. Still, secretaries, as elsewhere, were always non-Indian. The problems faced by Caxhuacan's council (*junta auxiliar*) in the first decades of the Porfiriato show how the non-Indian presence in Indian pueblos could provoke tensions as non-Indians retained attitudes, or tried to impose practices, that harked back to colonial times, at the same time that they implemented those liberal policies that suited their interests. Caxhuacan's non-Indian authorities and administrators conducted pueblo affairs in a very different manner to Montaña leaders such as mestizo Juan Crisóstomo Bonilla or Nahua Francisco Agustín Dieguillo in Cuetzalan, who sought to implement those aspects of liberal legislation which benefited the Indian population, such as the abolition of onerous colonial practices.<sup>10</sup>

The most salient mestizo presence in Caxhuacan in 1881 was alderman Gabriel A. Lobato. When the town council faced decreasing numbers of taxpayers due to emigration, Lobato wrote with concern to Huehuetla's president, accusing villagers of fleeing town to avoid not only taxes but also attendance to school. Lobato was right: while men in temperate lands migrated to search for wages outside the agricultural season, in tropical Caxhuacan, migration was generally a time-honoured tactic to avoid Church and state excesses such as taxation or compulsory schooling.<sup>11</sup>

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(México: Secretaría de Fomento, 1902).

<sup>10</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian Conflict'.

<sup>11</sup> For fleeing as a strategy to avoid onerous colonial rule in the region, see Bernardo García, *Los pueblos de la Sierra*, pp. 261-268.

But Lobato could not understand the circumstances that drove Caxhuaqueños to leave their village, thus evading obligatory education:

Although I have worked avidly to compel parents to send their children to primary school every day, I have been unable to achieve this commendable objective. The population's ignorance is so crass that many have migrated simply because they had been forced to allow their children to benefit from the paternal protection granted by the law of 16 September 1867.<sup>12</sup>

Sympathy towards hard-pressed villagers was more apparent when a group of *vecinos* requested a paddock from communal land so that their cattle could provide for tax payment. This was in fact a customary practice of Indian pueblos which inevitably declined or disappeared after disentanglement. However, given that the process of communal land sales had not yet started in Caxhuacan, the authorities' observation that the problem was one of soil exhaustion, rather than availability of communal land, was plausible. According to alderman Agustín Vázquez, it was the ambition of a few *vecinos*, who had burnt the land to prepare for cultivation, which had rendered the paddock useless for cattle. On this occasion alderman Lobato supported the petition as a solution that would benefit both the poor villagers and the council's revenues:

In years gone by, when there was a communal paddock, all payments were made punctually and the inhabitants of this pueblo were able to comfortably meet their needs so that they were never in need of emigrating [...] in fact, the pueblo residents cultivated the land, which fortunately is very fertile, and the population grew.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> AMH, box 3, Presidencia, Gabriel A. Lobato to Presidente Huehuetla, Caxhuacan 1 Feb 1881.

<sup>13</sup> AMH, box 5, Presidencia, 'Copia del Acta del Juzgado Constitucional de Caxhuacan. Sesión de 22 de febrero de 1881', Caxhuacan 23 Feb 1881.

In spite of such efforts, the town's finances continued to suffer. Not only was Caxhuacan losing taxpayers fleeing exactions but its treasury had a deficit. Huehuetla's president wrote to Caxhuacan calling Pedro Santiago, the Totonac mayor, to the municipal seat to give an explanation for the diminished funds. The secretary read the notice aloud while Lobato translated from Spanish to Totonac; Pedro Santiago agreed to appear before Huehuetla's president but the next day he fled town.<sup>14</sup> The situation probably favoured an already ambitious Lobato, and in 1883 he became *presidente auxiliar* of Caxhuacan.

As president of Caxhuacan, Lobato faced accusations that he was forcing Indian widows to give *semanera* labour. Under this system of colonial origin, they were obliged to provide domestic service on a weekly basis. Lobato defended himself claiming he paid for the services of a woman in his home as well as other workers to help the schoolteacher and his assistant. He nonetheless found that a system of free labour did not guarantee the provision of services he deemed indispensable, and implied a measure of coercion was necessary:

The *semanera* labour demanded of the indigenous widows of this pueblo is remunerated and it is only for the service of the schoolmaster and the teaching assistant at the municipal school. It is vital that the *semanera* system be maintained because we cannot find people to serve these employees. The women generally refuse to give such services, ever ready to find an excuse to avoid them...<sup>15</sup>

The fact that the teacher and his assistant were the recipients of such services, and that Lobato found it legitimate, reveals the reluctance of the authorities to abandon

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<sup>14</sup> AMH, box 5, Presidencia, Gabriel A. Lobato to Presidente Huehuetla, Caxhuacan 23 April 1881.



old practices, and the relatively privileged position of the mestizo schoolmaster in town. Would the Indian widows who reluctantly gave such services be willing to send their children to be taught by these men?

Abuses prohibited by law, however, were not committed only by mestizos. After Lobato, Caxhuacan had several Totonac presidents. In 1893, for instance, president Serafin Juárez and deputy president Juan Santiago were accused of illegally appropriating the land of fellow Totonac villager Manuel García. The non-Indian judge and future auxiliary president Antonio Castañeda transmitted the complaint to Huehuetla.<sup>16</sup>

In the 1890s the Caxhuacan administration faced various routine problems. The division and distribution of land for the application of *desamortización* commenced, causing several boundary conflicts with Ozelonacaxtla in the municipality of Atlequizayán and with a neighbouring municipality in the state of Veracruz.<sup>17</sup> Taxes continued to cause minor resistance, often solved by the jailing of debtors.<sup>18</sup> But perhaps the most salient problem faced by the *junta auxiliar* was an 1898 complaint by Totonac men that they were being forced to labour unpaid for the

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<sup>15</sup> AMH, box 10, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 9 Expediente con las actas que levantó la Junta Auxiliar del pueblo de Caxhuacan', 31 May 1886.

<sup>16</sup> AMH, box 12, Presidencia, Antonio Castañeda to Presidente Huehuetla, Caxhuacan 21 Dec 1893.

<sup>17</sup> AMH, box 13, Presidencia, 'Expediente que contiene la correspondencia oficial del mes de junio de 1896', Caxhuacan 1 July 1896, box 15, Presidencia, 'Expediente que contiene la correspondencia oficial del mes de junio de 1897', Caxhuacan 17 May 1897 and box 26, Presidencia, 'Comunicaciones recibidas en esta secretaría durante el mes de Marzo', Caxhuacan 4 March 1902.

<sup>18</sup> AMH, box 13, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 12. Que contiene la correspondencia oficial del mes de Diciembre de 1899', Caxhuacan 14 and 16 Dec 1899, box 16, Presidencia, 'Expediente que contiene la correspondencia oficial del mes de diciembre de 1897', Zacatlán 31 Dec 1897 and box 26, Presidencia, 'Comunicaciones recibidas en esta secretaría durante el mes de Febrero', Caxhuacan 24 Feb 1902.

construction of houses for a wealthy non-Indian trader called Jacinto Párraga and his sister Lucinda. Measures to force the Totonac villagers to provide services for the Párragas included fines and jail. The protesters saw the labour required as *servicios personales* while the authority claimed they were merely requesting *faenas* for the common good. Before relating the development of the Párragas case, it is necessary to clarify the terms used by the authorities and the protesters.

*Servicios personales* was a colonial term to refer to the compulsory and unpaid domestic, courier and other services provided by Indian men, women and children, as has been seen for the case of *semaneras* above. While *servicios personales* clearly benefited non-Indians at the expense of Indians, the practice of *faenas* was more ambiguous. *Faenas* was the term used for unremunerated and compulsory labour for public works, given by all Indian adult men under the supervision of local authorities. *Faenas*, together with *servicios personales*, had been abolished by the 1857 Constitution and there were some attempts to stop them, especially by Montaña leaders and liberal *jefes políticos*.<sup>19</sup> However, given the municipalities' scarce resources and the pressing needs to build and repair roads, town halls and schools (frequently in disrepair due to rough weather conditions), *faenas* were widespread practice in the Sierra right up to the mid- and late-twentieth century. Some changes nevertheless occurred. Notably, both Indians and non-Indians would be obliged to provide *faenas*. Yet the wealthier generally contributed money, paid somebody to do the manual work for them, or supervised the labourers. Some *faenas* were resisted more than others, for instance those imposed by municipal

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<sup>19</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 12-14, 206, 217.

presidents on subject villages, especially when sites were far from labourers' homes, and did not immediately benefit them, were often unwelcome.

In the case of the Caxhuacan complaint against the Párragas, the request of *faenas*, even if they were to be performed in town, was seen as an outright abuse. The point of view of the president of Caxhuacan was different. According to his account, work had started to enlarge the town square. As part of this it was necessary to demolish the house of Lucinda Párraga and it was also proposed to appropriate the home of Jacinto Párraga in order to house the boys' school. Those affected were offered new houses nearby. It was for this reason that villagers had been summoned to *faenas* to build the houses of the Párragas. In spite of the common good objective of the new town square, the protesters saw the construction of brand new homes for the Párragas as *servicios personales* or exploitative labour for the benefit of the rich. Two local notables, a Nava and a Castañeda, both belonging to respected non-Indian families of Caxhuacan, supported the complaint. The president of Huehuetla, non-Indian Federico González, using a common image, explained the situation to the *jefe político* as one of indigenous villagers manipulated by disloyal non-Indians who were 'enemies of progress'.<sup>20</sup> The indigenous villagers, in fact, were acting in their own interest (trying to reduce the labour and services they so often had to give whether for public or private benefit) and were backed by the constitutional prohibition of compulsory unremunerated labour, while Nava and Castañeda, needless to say, were those who opposed the current authorities and competed with them. This would be only one of many instances where Indian villagers of modest means found it useful to

associate with local non-Indian notables and viceversa. On the occasions when they did not find allies in their town, they resorted to the *jefe político* addressing him as a good father or patriarch. Thus Caxhuacan Totonacs found mestizos to be exploiters as well as allies, just as they did among their own.

### Non-Indian Authorities in Huehuetla

The presence of non-Indians in the government and administration of Huehuetla poses a problem. Why did Totonac authorities, who were so commanding when curbing the priest's exactions, accept mestizos who often abused their powers as secretaries, treasurers or aldermen and sometimes even spoke of Indians with contempt in council meetings? One possible explanation is that most Totonac men lacked the skills necessary to run the town council or to correspond with higher authorities. In post-Independence Mexico, Spanish became the official language of administration and documents would no longer be written in indigenous languages. Indian authorities were expected to write in Spanish. Some Indian authorities might have adapted well to changes, but evidence suggests the majority did not.<sup>21</sup> Ironically, it might have been the decline of the Church, and the bilingual education it provided, that left Totonacs unskilled, with mestizos filling the gap. But before reaching any conclusions, let us first explore the role of non-Indians in Huehuetla's government.

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<sup>20</sup> AMH, box 18, Presidencia, 'Expediente que contiene la correspondencia oficial del mes de mayo de 1898', Caxhuacan 10 June 1898 and Huehuetla 17 June 1898.

<sup>21</sup> Elsie Rockwell, 'Learning for Life', p. 4.

From a family of traders among the first non-Indians to settle in Huehuetla, Aurelio de la Calleja was schoolmaster in 1874. He became object of a vociferous complaint by '*el pueblo en masa*'. The protest reached the *jefe político*, who ordered his removal.<sup>22</sup> Despite public disapproval of Calleja, at least in his role as teacher, a few years later, in April 1878, he was chosen as temporary secretary. We learn of this decision from the Huehuetla council minutes, probably penned by the current secretary José María Martínez, but possibly influenced by the Totonac voices in the council. The document emphasised the importance of the secretary by pointing out that the smooth running of the council and the strict application of educational legislation both rested on his work. The specific qualities that made Calleja a good candidate, according to the minutes, were his honesty and his knowledge of Totonac, which was 'perhaps the most necessary and indispensable' skill.<sup>23</sup>

It was this know-how, compared to common Indian monolingualism and ignorance of the details of legislation and administration, that gave secretaries a degree of legitimacy as they became the inevitable link with higher authorities.<sup>24</sup> Non-Indian aldermen in Huehuetla and Caxhuacan played a similar role. While bilingual mestizos had an asset in their knowledge of the two languages, it is not clear

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<sup>22</sup> AMH, box 2, Presidencia, 'Padrón general que contiene el censo de habitantes de este pueblo de Huehuetla en el año de 1875', entries 1813 and 1859. Later on, for reasons unknown, the *jefatura* ordered his return but he refused. AMH, box 2, Presidencia, 'Borrador de oficios de este Juzgado...', entries for Sept and Oct 1874.

<sup>23</sup> AMH, box 2, Presidencia, Libro de sesiones, entry for 1 April 1878.

<sup>24</sup> References to the consultation of *pasados* in Huehuetla mentioned the presence of an interpreter to inform the elders of the town council proposals as they did not understand Spanish. See AMH, box 2, Presidencia, Borrador de Oficios de 1876, entry for 15 June 1876.

whether more mestizos than Totonacs were bilingual.<sup>25</sup> It is possible that a good number of Totonacs were bilingual, but few would have been literate. In any case, bilingual and/or literate Totonacs might have been left out of government by *pasados* who found monolingual men more trustworthy and less likely to betray Indian interests.<sup>26</sup>

The mestizo secretaries' bilingualism and literacy, and their role as mediators between Indian and non-Indian, made them powerful figures. Additionally, they enjoyed a degree of immunity from frequent abuses and corruption because of the support of the municipal president and the *jefe político*. But such support was not unconditional and could not be taken for granted. We learn of secretaries' abuses from *El Progreso de Zacatlán*, a liberal paper (published in the district capital) strongly opposed to the politics of the Montaña, which they derisively called *cacicazgo*.<sup>27</sup> Secretaries were accused of unjust land-grabbing under the pretext of *desamortización* laws and with the aid of the *jefe político*, as well as manipulation of elections and embezzlement.<sup>28</sup> According to *El Progreso*, secretaries had become the absolute arbiters of the pueblos with the support of the *jefe político*.

The situation of Huehuetla confirmed the frequency of abuses. Yet, although law and order were not universal, neither was impunity. Abuses were punished or

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<sup>25</sup> During the Porfiriato, census figures did not register data for bilingualism.

<sup>26</sup> On Indian authorities' monolingualism as a guarantee of their loyalty to the Indian pueblo interests, and Indian reluctance to appoint bilingual men to represent them, see Jan Rus and Robert Wasserstrom, 'Civil-religious hierarchy in central Chiapas', p. 473 and Jan Rus, 'The "Comunidad Revolucionaria Institucional"', pp. 269-271.

<sup>27</sup> 'Abusos en los pueblos de la Sierra' in *El Progreso de Zacatlán*, vol. II, no. 9, 1 July 1883. Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 241-244

<sup>28</sup> 'Adjudicaciones hechas por el jefe político' in *El Progreso de Zacatlán*, vol. II, no. 17, 1 Nov 1883.

tolerated according to the specific configurations of power, and the wrangles between factions, in towns, municipalities, districts and state government. This is borne out in the cases of Apolinario Mora and José Dolores Balderas as well as Federico González, a former secretary who became the first non-Indian president of Huehuetla.

Apolinario Mora was listed in the census as '*gente de razón*' and a '*comerciante*' who could read and write.<sup>29</sup> In December 1874, when Zacatlán requested that the Huehuetla treasury pay an outstanding debt, Totonac Francisco García aired the corrupt practices of Mora, who had been treasurer (or perhaps secretary) at the time the debt was contracted: 'When he had to pay \$10 to Olintla, he would collect \$45'. Fortunately, he had been stopped by the *jefatura* and was eventually removed, together with other corrupt men in office.<sup>30</sup> However, like Aurelio de la Calleja, his corrupt practices and resulting eviction from the council did not prevent him from participating in the council administration of Huehuetla in later years. In 1885, for instance, he was elected *juez de paz mayor* in the municipality, an office which Sierra Indians invested with particular importance and which, nevertheless, was already being taken by non-Indians.<sup>31</sup> As registered by the secretary, alderman José de Luna gave openly racist justifications for the need to appoint the non-Indian Mora as a judge: 'It is well known that indigenous men are

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<sup>29</sup> AMH, box 2, Presidencia, 'Padrón de los ciudadanos rebajados de Huehuetla año 1870' and box 11, Presidencia, 'Padrón General de los habitantes de todo sexo y edad que forma el pueblo de Huehuetla, 1879', entry no. 894.

<sup>30</sup> AMH, box 2, Presidencia, 'Borrador de oficios de este Juzgado...', Francisco García to Jefe Político, Huehuetla 25 Dec 1874.

<sup>31</sup> For the importance of the justice of peace and judges in nineteenth-century Sierra Indian communities see Francisco Javier Arriaga, *Expediente Geográfico-Estadístico*, p. 29. Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, p. 12.

slow-witted and most of them drink excessively'.<sup>32</sup> Policing duties apparently were also assigned under such principles: among other '*gente de razón*' Apolinario Mora was appointed to police the 15-16 September Independence celebrations of 1889. He also became inspector of the philharmonic corps at a time when the band (mostly formed by Totonac men) had been criticised for disorderly behaviour and 'abuses' (unspecified but perhaps involving excessive alcohol consumption) during private and public concerts. To remedy the situation, and according to the council minutes, Totonac alderman Bonifacio Espinosa proposed to appoint Apolinario Mora, whom he described as 'a man of respect and good judgement'.<sup>33</sup> Additionally, it was common practice to appoint non-Indians to organise and supervise the *faenas* of the Indian workforce.<sup>34</sup> By contrast, in August 1885 Mora had been part of a commission of three non-Indians and two Totonacs appointed to oversee the boundaries under dispute between Hueytlalpan and Huehuetla.<sup>35</sup>

Thus non-Indians sought to advance positions within pueblo government and believed their mission was to civilise the Indian, whether by means of law and order, or musical education and work discipline. If Luna's racist view was representative of what mestizos thought of Indians, then the consultation of Indian elders (as in municipal boundaries, for instance) was only reluctantly accepted by non-Indians, an

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<sup>32</sup> AMH, box 5, Presidencia, Libro de Actas para la municipalidad de Huehuetla para el año de 1885, entry for 13 Jan 1885.

<sup>33</sup> AMH, box 11, Presidencia, Libro de Actas para la municipalidad de Huehuetla para el año de 1889, entries for 11 May 1889 and 31 Aug 1889.

<sup>34</sup> AMH, box 2, Presidencia, Libro de sesiones, entry for 27 Nov 1878. For such practice in later years see Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, pp. 136-139.

<sup>35</sup> AMH, box 5, Presidencia, Libro de Actas para la municipalidad de Huehuetla para el año de 1885, entries for 7 and 24 Aug 1885.



issue where they felt it would be wise to give in, in order to prevent disaffection among the Totonac majority.

During the 1880s José Dolores Balderas was secretary for Huehuetla's council, sometimes for the court (*juzgado*), and he also functioned as treasurer for specific building projects.<sup>36</sup> In 1891, a number of Totonac residents, led by non-Indian trader Daniel Arroyo, made strong accusations against secretary Balderas. Later the same year, Balderas was removed after the decision of the state government to investigate the accusations. The Huehuetla council appointed a new secretary to replace him. By then Balderas had arbitrarily appropriated communal land without the approval of the *Ayuntamiento* or the issuing of property titles through a legal process of *desamortización*.<sup>37</sup> Additionally he had helped Jesús Cabrera, a non-Indian distillery-owner, in his illegal land-grabbing.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, according to the newspaper *El Eco de Zacatlán*, Balderas also resorted to repression. Presenting itself as a defender of the pueblos and the Indians, *El Eco* lamented that accusations against secretaries were on the wane due to repressive measures, and mentioned Balderas as an example:

Indians are so cowed these days that they rarely complain, and when they dare to do so, they risk the secretary's revenge. There

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<sup>36</sup> AMH, box 5, Presidencia, Libro de Actas para la municipalidad de Huehuetla para el año 1885, entry for 1 Jan 1885 and 17 March 1885. AMH, box 11, Presidencia, Libro de Actas 1889, entry for 15 Jan 1889 and 31 March 1889.

<sup>37</sup> AMH, box 12, Presidencia, 'Expediente que contiene la correspondencia oficial recibida y remitida en Noviembre 1891', Mateo García to Jefe Político, Huehuetla 3 Nov 1891; Libro de Actas de 1891, entry for 7 Nov 1891; 'Libro de Actas para el año de 1892', entry for 28 May 1892.

<sup>38</sup> AMH, box 12, Presidencia, 'Libro de Actas para el año de 1892', entry for 28 May 1892.

have been cases such as that of Balderas, former secretary of Huehuetla, who ordered some poor Indians to be tortured.<sup>39</sup>

This were indeed serious abuses but, by 1892, José Dolores Balderas was in prison in Zacatlán, accused of land-grabbing and embezzlement.<sup>40</sup> Additionally, the land ambitions of his protégé, Jesús Cabrera, had been frustrated: although he managed to claim and legally obtain a plot, this was reduced to six hectares so that it would not interfere with the land of his Totonac neighbours, which he had tried to appropriate.<sup>41</sup>

Both Jesús Cabrera and José Dolores Balderas tried to benefit illegitimately from changes in land law, but they found their ambitions thwarted not only by Totonac resistance but also by factionalism among ambitious non-Indians. One of these ambitious men, Federico González, would become the first non-Indian municipal president of Huehuetla in 1897.

### Federico González: The Making of a Cacique

Federico González first lived in the municipal seat of Hueytlalpan, where non-Indian presence had a longer history than in the adjoining pueblo of Huehuetla, still

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<sup>39</sup> 'Boletín' in *El Eco de Zacatlán*, year II, no. 33, 2 Oct 1892.

<sup>40</sup> *El Eco de Zacatlán*, year II, no. 38, 13 Nov 1892. AMH, box 12, Libro de Actas para el año de 1891', entries for 28 Feb 1891, 31 March 1891 and 15 July 1891; box 18, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 18. Expediente de comunicaciones oficiales que ingresaron a esta oficina en el mes de octubre de 1891', Ramón Márquez Galindo to Presidente Huehuetla, Zacatlán, 21, 28 and 29 Oct 1891.

<sup>41</sup> AMH, box 15, Presidencia, 'Libro de Acuerdos para el año de 1898', Denuncias de terrenos de los propios del Ayuntamiento, Huehuetla, Dec 1898; box 18, Presidencia, Federico González to *Jefe Político*, Huehuetla 5 March 1898; 'Exp. que contiene la correspondencia oficial del mes de diciembre 1898', Mateo Gaona to Zacatlán, Huehuetla 10 Feb 1898 and Federico González to Jefe Político, Huehuetla 31 Dec 1898.

dependent on the municipality of Olintla. In 1875 he moved to the pueblo of Huehuetla to take up the post of secretary. Ten years later, aged twenty-five and back in Hueytlalpan, he became municipal president. But it would be on his return to Huehuetla that González would acquire more land and greater power, to eventually meet his death after rising up against his opponents in the midst of the revolutionary turmoil of the 1910s.<sup>42</sup>

In 1896, González went back to Huehuetla as deputy mayor (*primer regidor suplente*) and it was as such that he began to claim land under *desamortización*.<sup>43</sup> Acting as secretary of the council, González passed and signed an agreement whereby he appropriated two estates which had been reserved by the 1895 town council for landless *vecinos*.<sup>44</sup> In 1897 González became municipal president of this overwhelmingly Totonac community. Like other local notables throughout the Sierra, he was a trader who owned a distillery and shops, but it was his greed for land that earned him a reputation as an oppressive cacique.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> González as secretary: AMH, box 1, Presidencia, Zacatlán 12 July 1875 and Olintla 4 Sep 1875. As municipal president of Hueytlalpan: AMH, box 7, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 2. Documentos del mes de febrero de 1884', Hueytlalpan 13 Feb 1884. As municipal president in Huehuetla: AMH, box 15, Presidencia, 'Expediente que contiene la correspondencia oficial del mes de junio de 1897' and 'Libro de Acuerdos para el año de 1898'. Interview with Orense Torres González, Huehuetla, 19 May 2002.

<sup>43</sup> AMH, box 1, Presidencia, 'Catastro de los terrenos de los propios de la corporación y de los de común repartimiento que han sido adjudicados, 1896-99'; box 13, Presidencia, 'Libro de Actas de 1896'.

<sup>44</sup> AMH, box 37, Presidencia, Presidente Municipal Onofre Ortuño to Puebla, 29 Dec 1915.

<sup>45</sup> AMH, box 13, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 12 que contiene la correspondencia oficial del mes de Diciembre de 1899', Zacatlán 5 Dec 1899 and Huehuetla 7 Dec 1899.

During his first years as president Federico González adjudicated himself and his brother Santiago a number of ranches under *desamortización*.<sup>46</sup> By 1904, lands owned by Federico and Santiago González were valued at \$510 for tax purposes.<sup>47</sup> These properties might have had greater value than was declared but they were moderate in comparison with the estates of the plateau. González's allies, such as Rosauero Castro, also benefited from land acquisition. While the majority of non-Indians resented González's actions, they could do little to curb them as he enjoyed support from Mucio Martínez, the Puebla state governor chosen by Porfirio Díaz.<sup>48</sup> While González and Rosauero Castro headed the town council (1897-1899 and 1900-1901 respectively) no complaints were filed against them. However, during the presidency of Miguel Espinosa (1905-1909), those most affected by the González's land-grabbing spoke up.

In 1905 Bonifacio García and other Totonac men, none of whom could sign their names, filed a complaint. For seventy years, their families had enjoyed usufruct of the municipal commons that the González brothers claimed under *desamortización*. The Totonac claimed that, following the exceptions listed in article 8 of the *ley de desamortización*, their lands were excluded from sale as communal distribution lands (*tierras de común repartimiento*). Moreover, in their view, and

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<sup>46</sup> AMH, box 1, Presidencia, 'Catastro de los terrenos de los propios de la corporación y de los de común repartimiento que han sido adjudicados, 1896-99'.

<sup>47</sup> AMH, box 32, Tesorería, 'Padrón de censatarios a título consignatario. Cuenta corriente 1904', Huehuetla 1 Jan 1904.

<sup>48</sup> Mucio Martínez was governor of Puebla from 1892 until the revolution broke up. An outsider from Nuevo León, he was chosen by Díaz to offset Puebla's political elite divisions. See Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution*, vol. 1., pp. 32, 75. On Martínez's backing of Federico González, see Archivo General Agrario de Puebla (AGAP), file 11494, box 1, doc.4-5, Huehuetla 26 March 1916.

according to legislation, the adjudication in favour of González should not have been enforced because it resulted in injury to a third party (the protesters themselves, enjoying usufruct of those fields). Most still worked their lands, cultivating coffee and vanilla plants, but lived with the threat of the encroaching presence of the González's livestock.

Miguel Espinosa, municipal president of Huehuetla in 1905, and probably a Totonac, allowed this first complaint to go through and further sustained it, providing evidence of the González's abuses. The damage done by the non-Indian men's cattle on Indian agriculture, and non-Indian men's fences around commons were present in the dispute. Allies of González, such as Rosauero Castro and Ignacio Lobato, also let their cattle roam through the disputed fields, damaging the Indians' crops.<sup>49</sup> In turn, the aggrieved Totonacs would seize the animals, only to have to let them go when confronted by the owners. At least once, the illiterate Totonacs whose lands were being trampled upon petitioned the *jefatura política* for a stop to cattle roaming and demanded compensation for the damage inflicted on their arable plots. The letter was penned in Zacatlán and the petitioners claimed that their grievances had not been heard by the municipal authorities, only to withdraw this last charge when they were called to ratify their complaint before a Totonac-Spanish interpreter. Meanwhile, the Huehuetla authorities wrote to the state government claiming that they were procuring compensation by demanding that González pay for the damage. They ratified the accusation against González but qualified it by pointing out that the

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<sup>49</sup> On the symbolic significance attached to such material losses by the victim see James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak. Everyday forms of peasant resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), pp. 271-272.

protesters had not surrendered the lands, that they continued to cultivate them so far as possible and that they had constantly promoted González's withdrawal. Finally, they requested a judicial solution to the dispute with the intervention of the state government.<sup>50</sup>

A second complaint from the same men came forward in 1906; this time they emphasized the authorities' complicity with González's abuses, called on the *jefatura* to prevent dispossession and attached their own applications to purchase the land under disentanglement law. A fortnight later, the Huehuetla authorities reported the accusations were just but González had not managed, despite constant attempts, to actually usurp the land.<sup>51</sup> Disputes continued throughout the 1900s with mixed results.<sup>52</sup> For instance, in 1909, the *juez menor* ordered Santiago González to stop exploitation of the disputed fields of Lacapan and Mujuyum until a land survey took place.<sup>53</sup> However, in September 1909 the *Ayuntamiento* surrendered the relatively large estate of Acnising to Federico González, in exchange for a small plot to build the boys' school.<sup>54</sup> Although the process of disentanglement, and especially the González brothers' abuses, were provoking tensions in Huehuetla, it would be

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<sup>50</sup> AMH, box 21, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 47. Relativo a la queja expuesta por Benedicto García y socios en contra de Federico González', Huehuetla 14 Oct 1905, Zacatlán 16 Oct, 10 and 12 Nov 1905.

<sup>51</sup> AMH, box 28, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 28. Relativo a la queja de Benedicto García y socios en contra de Federico González', Zacatlán 17 March 1906, Huehuetla 2 and 3 April 1906.

<sup>52</sup> AMH, box 28, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 5. Relativo a la queja interpuesta por despojo en contra de Santiago González', Huehuetla, 21 and 28 April, 14 May 1906.

<sup>53</sup> AMH, box 28, 'Exp. no. 23. Relativo al ocurso presentado por el C. Santiago González y que pide se haga un reconocimiento de límites y medición del potrero que tiene ubicado en ese pueblo con el nombre de Lacapan y Mujuyum', Huehuetla 16, 20 and 25 March 1909.

<sup>54</sup> AGAP, file 11494, box 1, doc. 221, Certificación del Acta de la Sesión de 4 de septiembre de 1909 en Huehuetla.

Federico González, rather than any of the aggrieved and resistant peasants, who would raise up in arms when the revolution erupted.

By 1910 Huehuetla had been upgraded to the category of *villa* and named Villa de Ramón Corral after the Vice-President of the Republic. A few months before the national uprising planned against Porfirio Díaz's regime, the authorities of Huehuetla reported on a series of urban improvements prepared for the September Independence centennial, mirroring those carried out throughout the country.<sup>55</sup> The inauguration of the new philharmonic corps occurred against the background of a newly built boys' school, with the council hall and girls' school recently repaired and painted. Streets and pavements around the main square had been embellished to follow the dictates of urban propriety. Work in progress included the fencing of the municipal cemetery and the introduction of potable water with an aqueduct and drinking fountains. The municipal presidency was occupied by Onofre Ortuño who governed undisturbed over the new *villa*.

Yet the land dispute started in 1905 between González and the group of Totonac men headed by Bonifacio García had not been resolved. To the frustration of the Totonac villagers, Presidents Miguel Espinosa and Onofre Ortuño transmitted the Totonacs' complaints to higher authorities but acted against González only half-heartedly. To the frustration of González, the new local authorities did not recognise the land titles he had given himself and his brothers while occupying the town

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<sup>55</sup> For the celebrations in Mexico City see Mauricio Tenorio Trillo, '1910 Mexico City: Space and Nation in the City of the Centenario', *JLAS*, 28:1 (1996), pp. 75-104. By contrast, the case of San José de Gracia, Michoacán, suggests that provincial towns without a liberal patriotic tradition of the strength of the Puebla Sierra's did not celebrate the centennial, see Luis González y González, *San José de Gracia*, pp. 115-116.

council.<sup>56</sup> After confronting the relative hostility of the Huehuetla councils from the presidency of Miguel Espinosa (1905-1909) to that of Onofre Ortuño (1911), Federico González rose up in arms and stormed Huehuetla's town council in March 1911. Disorders immediately resulted in the disruption of tax collection and the suspension of school activities and band practice. On 27 May National Guard forces from Zacatlán forced the entrance gate to the town council, which had remained closed after González's rebellion, returned power to the council headed by Onofre Ortuño and ordered the arrest of González and his followers.<sup>57</sup>

By August 1911, schools had re-opened and Huehuetla's administration resumed tax collection and organised *faenas* for public works. Arrangements were even made for a modest Independence celebration in September. December, however, saw new disorder with men from surrounding villages joining the rebellious González. The Huehuetla council continued in place but faced increasing difficulties.<sup>58</sup> Resistance to tax collection became common. The local elections of December 1911 were declared null and void while elections programmed for February 1912 did not take place because of the revolutionary turmoil.<sup>59</sup>

González did not join any revolutionary group; he simply found his ambitions thwarted by the Totonacs' stubborn resistance to his land-grabbing and the hostility of his equals (but not his allies) who succeeded him in local government. Most non-

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<sup>56</sup> AMH, box 26, Presidencia, 'Informe administrativo', Boleta de acuerdos del mes de mayo, Huehuetla 31 May 1902.

<sup>57</sup> AMH, box 39, Presidencia, 'Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento. 1911', entries for 30 and 31 March, 11 April and 27 May 1911.

<sup>58</sup> AMH, box 39, Presidencia, 'Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento. 1911', entries for 13 June; 4 July; 5, 7 and 28 Aug; 11 and 18 Sep; 9 and 30 Oct; 18 and 25 Dec 1911.



Indian traders were content with the monopoly on regional commerce and the increased control of administration to the detriment of the Totonacs' presence in town and village councils, even if they found they had to give up land ambitions and settle for small properties. Onofre Ortuño, for instance, was a 35-year-old newcomer to Huehuetla and had therefore not benefited from the disentailment of the 1890s. When he became municipal president again in 1920, he owned a mere 15 hectares. Ortuño was one of a number of enterprising men, including the older families as well as newcomers, who owned distilleries, more or less important commercial houses and shops, and who would occupy municipal office in 1910-1940 but whose landed property, even when they had benefited from the sub-division of commons, was modest.<sup>60</sup>

Cacique González's properties were moderate by national standards but proved excessive for the Sierra. At an unknown date, but not long after his taking arms, Federico González died fighting government forces. His brothers Santiago and Modesto, his son Gregorio and widow Concepción Castro survived him.<sup>61</sup> Land conflict resumed in Huehuetla in 1916 and will be discussed in Chapter Six.

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<sup>59</sup> AMH, box 39, Presidencia, Cumplido to Jefatura Política, Huehuetla 2 July 1912.

<sup>60</sup> See Chapter Six.

<sup>61</sup> Interview with Orense Torres González, Huehuetla, 19 May 2002. AGAP, file 11494, box 1, docs. 4-5, Huehuetla 26 March 1916.

## Conclusion

This section has explored the advances of non-Indians upon Huehuetla's land and administration. The process of *desamortización*, which began belatedly in the 1890s, provoked considerable overt resistance from Totonacs but no rebellion. Unlike Cuetzaltecós in the 1860s and 1870s, Huehuetecos in the late Porfiriato, even if they had had the means to establish the right connections, could not count on a strong Montaña party to protect their interests. The Montaña's power and the Sierra cacique Juan Francisco Lucas' capacity to mediate conflict and safeguard Indian interests had been seriously undermined by the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>62</sup>

In the cases of Huehuetla and Caxhuacan, we have observed that in many occasions Totonac authorities and petitioners were monolingual and illiterate, and therefore depended on the few interpreters, translators and scribes available, many of whom were non-Indian. Although there is no reason to believe that ordinary Indian peasants would find Spanish literacy useful, the case of Totonac authorities was different. As they faced a Spanish-speaking administration, they must have developed an interest in learning to speak, read and write Spanish. Or at least they would have recognised its usefulness and perhaps sought for their children to acquire such abilities. In 1878, for instance, the Huehuetla council, composed of Indian and non-Indian men, emphasised the need for a teacher to instruct school-age children, both '*de razón*' and '*indígenas*'. By contrast, only a few months later, the district administration inspector (*visitador de la jefatura política*) recommended that

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<sup>62</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism, Politics and Popular Liberalism*, pp. 261, 263-267.

Huehuetla pay greater attention to schooling because 'there were already several families of *gente de razón* in town', thus taking into account only the non-Indian population.<sup>63</sup> Such disregard for Indian education suggests that when the Huehuetla council did take into account Indian children, it had been the presence of Totonac aldermen that made a difference. But did Indian parents send their children to school? And what did pupils learn? The next section will assess the provision of schooling and especially the opportunities available for Totonac children to learn to read and write in Spanish.

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<sup>63</sup> AMH, box 2, Presidencia, Libro de sesiones, entries for 1 April 1878 and 27 Nov 1878.

## II. Teaching to Read and Write in Indian Huehuetla

This section examines education in the municipality of Huehuetla, where more Indian children attended the *cabecera* schools than they did in Cuetzalan. Female schooling, as in Cuetzalan, lagged behind. I consider the expansion of schooling to the *rancherías* (hamlets), and the significance of public examinations for the villages' autonomy. This is followed by a reflection on the shortage of competent teachers and how negligent teachers, via their irresponsibility, unintentionally gave Indian and non-Indian children a space for creativity in a bilingual context.

Throughout the section, the state of education in Huehuetla is explored in relation to the district capital of Zacatlán. The latter was known as the birthplace of prominent regional and national intellectuals and for the high quality of its municipal schools, and it provides us with a broader view of educational developments and debates in Puebla and the country at large. The influence of Zacatlán reached Huehuetla formally via the supervisory role of the district board of school inspection, but, more importantly, in the form of Zacateco reading and writing primers which shaped schooling in the semi-tropical Totonac municipality. The language problems faced in schools, which have already been discussed for Cuetzalan, are further examined by focusing on reading and writing methods, showing how these might have further widened the skills gap between Indians and non-Indians. Finally, drawing on debates on Indian education in Zacatlán, Puebla and Mexico City, this section concludes with a reflection on the dominant liberal ideology's neglect of the

difficulties posed by language differences in the classroom, and, indeed, by the ethnic diversity of the country.

### The Educational Vanguard in Zacatlán

In January 1885 the period of Montaña state governor Juan N. Méndez expired and Porfirio Díaz favoured an outsider to Puebla politics to head the state government. Under the new government, criticism of the Montaña, mounting since 1880, was able to flourish in Zacatlán. An educated middle class, with links to Mexico City, devoted readers of the liberal, and often anti-government *El Diario del Hogar*, published its own local newspapers in the district headtown.<sup>64</sup> *El Progreso de Zacatlán* (1880-1884), *El Eco de Zacatlán* (1891-1894) and *El Escolar Zacateco* (1891-1894) reported on a wide range of regional issues from school exams to tax problems. In a town with literacy above the national rate (26 against 17 percent), this local press became a vehicle for expressing political views including strong criticism of the Montaña cacicazgo.<sup>65</sup> The Montaña party was accused of an excessive zeal for educational legislation and regulations, but lacking any concomitant concern to apply them efficiently. Montaña local administrations, especially their inspectors, *consejos*

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<sup>64</sup> On *El Diario del Hogar*, see Daniel Cosío Villegas, *Historia Moderna de México. El Porfiriato. La Vida Política Exterior, Parte Segunda* (México: Hermes, 1963), p. 251.

<sup>65</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 241-244. María del Pilar Cuevas Aguirre, *Historia de la educación elemental en Zacatlán, 1880-1900* (Licenciatura thesis. Universidad Autónoma de Puebla. 2000), p. 162. *Censo General de la República Mexicana verificado el 28 de octubre de 1900 conforme a las instrucciones de la Dirección General de Estadística* (México: Secretaría de Fomento, 1902).

*de vigilancia* (boards of school inspection) and secretaries, were blamed for putting political and personal interests before education.<sup>66</sup>

A few days before Juan N. Méndez stepped down from state government, early in 1885, the Zacatlán city council was renewed and the liberals of *El Progreso* and *El Eco*, who had been opposed to the Montaña, took over. The *jefatura política*, which remained in the hands of Montaña member Ramón Márquez Galindo until 1891, was a favourite target of criticism of the new liberals. Among the latter was Angel W. Cabrera, alderman in charge of public instruction and president of the *consejo de vigilancia*, who would play a key role in schooling throughout the district of Zacatlán, introducing the latest European pedagogical advances to municipal and lay schools in the district.

Soon after the liberal opponents of the Montaña took over the council in February 1885, Zacatlán's first kindergarten was opened. The inauguration ceremony was presided over by members of the new local government but the school would be called 'Ramón Márquez Galindo'. Furniture and equipment were specifically designed for children under six as prescribed by the theories of Friedrich Froebel and were brought especially from Germany.<sup>67</sup> By then the town of Zacatlán already had a music school and a school for adults as well as primary schools for boys and girls. The latter offered a full five-year primary programme that allowed successful students to pursue higher education in Puebla City. Many of the teachers in Zacatlán, including some women, had been educated at college in Puebla or had benefited from

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<sup>66</sup> *El Progreso de Zacatlán*, vol. 2, no. 22, 'Ventajas de los exámenes públicos', 15 January 1884. On inspectors: *El Progreso de Zacatlán*, vol. 1, no. 17, 15 May 1881.

<sup>67</sup> AMH, box 5, *Boletín Municipal de Zacatlán*, vol 1, no. 1, 1 Feb 1885 and no. 7, 1 May 1885.

the tutorials of prominent local intellectuals such as Angel W. Cabrera.<sup>68</sup> Zacatlán's good reputation for educational provision was further enhanced by private schools, lay and Catholic, the best known of which was that of José Dolores Pérez, a disciple of Angel W. Cabrera. Among Pérez's salient students was the future Carrancista intellectual Luis Cabrera. Additionally, within the municipality of Zacatlán in the 1880s and 1890s, there were between ten and fifteen schools in the pueblos, barrios and rancherías.<sup>69</sup> Further into the Sierra, in the semi-tropical Totonac region, Huehuetla boasted more modest but by no means negligible advances in schooling. Notably, as will be seen in the last section of this chapter, the pedagogical advances introduced by Angel W. Cabrera reached the Huehuetla schools.

### Huehuetla's School Expansion

The first section of this chapter outlined the late penetration of non-Indians in Huehuetla compared to Cuetzalan. While in Cuetzalan they were occupying the

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<sup>68</sup> The most salient of the educated women in Zacatlán was Paulina Maraver, who was born in Tlaxcala in 1867 and graduated from the Teacher Training College in Puebla City in 1891. In the early 1890s she taught at the girls' primary school in Zacatlán and collaborated with Angel W. Cabrera in *El Escolar Zacateco*. She later worked at the College in Puebla City and organised a women's revolutionary *junta* to support Francisco I. Madero. Enrique Cordero y Torres, *Diccionario Biográfico de Puebla*, vol. II. (Puebla: Centro de Estudios Históricos, 1989), pp. 800-802. David LaFrance, *The Mexican Revolution in Puebla, 1908-1913: The Maderista Movement and the Failure of Liberal Reform* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1989), p. 43.

<sup>69</sup> María del Pilar Cuevas Aguirre, *Historia de la educación elemental en Zacatlán*, pp. 67, 79-94, 105-111, 119-122. José Angel Fabre Baños, *Los prenormalistas poblanos y su influencia en la fundación del Instituto Normal del Estado* (Puebla: SEP-BINE, 1990). Eugenia Meyer, *Luis Cabrera: Teórico y crítico de la Revolución* (México: SEP/SETENTAS, 1972), pp. 11-12.

municipal presidency at least since the 1860s, and monopolised it after 1888, in Huehuetla they only took it in 1897 and Totonacs were still elected to the council in the subsequent years. Moreover, the non-Indian population in Huehuetla was proportionally smaller than that of Cuetzalan. The lesser penetration of non-Indians in Huehuetla was reflected in the situation of public instruction: more Indian children attended school in the municipal seat of Huehuetla compared to the headtown of Cuetzalan. At the beginning of the Porfiriato, there were 35 children registered in Huehuetla's boys' school, only 4 of whom bore non-Indian surnames.<sup>70</sup>

During the 1870s only reading, writing and arithmetic were taught in Huehuetla, which lagged behind the official programme which included *civismo*, history and natural sciences among other subjects.<sup>71</sup> The curriculum would expand and registration rise in subsequent years, while there continued to be a majority of Totonac students. In addition to the three Rs, the intermediate and advanced groups studied Geometry, Ethics, Drawing, Geography, Civic Instruction, Law and History lessons.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> AMH, box 2, Presidencia, 'Presupuesto de los gastos que deben erogarse en este pueblo para el año próximo', Bonifacio de Gaona, Huehuetla 28 Dec 1876 and Instrucción Pública, 'Lista de alumnos que concurren a este establecimiento con expresión de sus faltas', Huehuetla 1 Jan 1877.

<sup>71</sup> AMH, box 2, Instrucción Pública, 'Estado que manifiesta el número de alumnos que concurren al establecimiento y que expresa los ramos que abarca su educación', José María Cabrera, Huehuetla 20 Sep 1878' and 'Estado que manifiesta el número de alumnos que concurren a este establecimiento', Daniel Arroyo, Huehuetla Nov 1879.

<sup>72</sup> For Law and History, examination records specified pages from textbooks, suggesting the teaching of these subjects strictly adhered to book content and was perhaps based on memorisation of paragraphs from such texts. AMH, box 16, Instrucción Pública, Acta de examen de la escuela de niños de Huehuetla, 27 Nov 1893.



Attendance was never higher than 90 boys.<sup>73</sup> As seen in Chapter Two for Cuetzalan, figures in Huehuetla strongly suggest the local school census underestimated the number of school-age children. If we take national census figures to be accurate, less than 10 percent of school-age boys were attending school in the headtown in 1902.<sup>74</sup> The boys' school in the pueblo of Caxhuacan had lower attendance than Huehuetla but given that Caxhuacan had a smaller population than the headtown, and fewer resources, its school did better.<sup>75</sup>

As in Cuetzalan, the gender divide was clear. Girls' schools opened later and had lower figures than boys' schools. Despite recommendations from the *jefatura política* that Huehuetla open a girls' school in 1877, this did not happen until 1885.<sup>76</sup> In Caxhuacan, it opened in 1893, when the list of girls registered shows a majority of

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<sup>73</sup> For these and the following figures of registration and attendance see tables in Appendix Three.

<sup>74</sup> *Censo de la República Mexicana verificado el 28 de octubre de 1900*. For local school censuses, see Appendix Three.

<sup>75</sup> The population of Caxhuacan in 1900 was 1782 compared to Huehuetla's 3696. Attendance in Caxhuacan fluctuated between 35 and 60. AMH, box 3, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 8. Expediente de noticias de estadística de la Instrucción Pública del pueblo de Caxhuacan por el mes de diciembre de 1889', Ambrosio Castañeda, Caxhuacan 30 Sep 1889. *Censo de la República Mexicana verificado el 28 de octubre de 1900* (México: Secretaría de Fomento, 1905).

<sup>76</sup> As in Cuetzalan, authorities assumed that only non-Indian families would send their daughters to school to learn 'reading, writing and sewing'. AMH, box 2, Presidencia, 'Libro de sesiones para el año de 1878', entry for 27 Nov 1878; 'Comunicaciones del mes de julio de 1879', Zacatlán 15 July 1879 and 'Estados de corte de caja del año de 1879', Huehuetla 30 April, 31 May, 30 June and 31 July 1879; box 4, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 3 Expediente que contiene documentos oficiales de la instrucción primaria que ingresaron en esta oficina el mes de octubre de 1885' and 'Exp. no. 11. Expediente que contiene 12 comunicaciones oficiales de los directores de las escuelas municipales, formado en octubre 1885'.

Totonac surnames.<sup>77</sup> Whether in the municipal seat or the dependent pueblo, female attendance figures during the Porfiriato were just above half the male's suggesting that inequality between the sexes, embedded in solid patriarchal relations, had a greater weight than the differences in wealth and resources between *cabeceras* and pueblos.<sup>78</sup>

At the turn of the twentieth century, as the population grew in the municipal seat of Huehuetla, some Totonacs abandoned the centre, which was increasingly dominated by non-Indians, and established settlements or *rancherías* in the periphery of the municipality.<sup>79</sup> As can be seen in Table 1, between 1900 and 1921, as new *rancherías* were formed, the population in the municipal seat decreased.

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<sup>77</sup> AMH, box 4, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 7. Expediente que contiene comunicaciones de la *Jefatura política* de Zacatlán y Juzgados de esta municipalidad por formación de documentos de Instrucción Primaria', Zacatlán, 19 January 1888 and box 12, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia sobre la instrucción primaria de la municipalidad de Huehuetla correspondiente a los meses de enero a marzo de 1893', Huehuetla 17 April 1893.

<sup>78</sup> See Appendix Three, Table 1 for a summary of averages and Tables 3, 5 and 6 for girls' schools.

**Table 1. Population in the Municipality of Huehuetla, 1875-1921.<sup>80</sup>**

Locality	1875	1879	1891	1900	1921
Huehuetla	1863	2161	2396	3696	2136
Caxhuacan				1782	2147
Chilocoyo					368
Xunalpu					485
San Miguel					1033
Other					1179
<b>Municipal Total</b>				<b>5478</b>	<b>7348</b>

The *rancherías* of Xunalpu, San Miguel and Vista Hermosa opened schools in the 1900s.<sup>81</sup> The teachers' salaries, always lower than those in Caxhuacan and Huehuetla, were funded by the municipal seat's Chicontepec revenue. Attendance in the *rancherías* remained very low but, given the size of the hamlets, their relative figures were probably similar to those of Caxhuacan or Huehuetla.<sup>82</sup>

In contrast to the all-Totonac *rancherías*, the *barrio* of Chilocoyo was populated by both Indians and non-Indians, its school, however, was attended mainly by non-Indians. This was a reflection of non-Indian encroachment in the *barrio*: the

<sup>79</sup> Alberto Becerril, *Andanzas de don Luis Salinas. Cuénteme uno de arrieros*, (Unpublished manuscript, Huehuetla 1995), pp. 18-19.

<sup>80</sup> AMH, box 2, Presidencia, 'Padrón general que contiene el censo de habitantes de este pueblo de Huehuetla en el año de 1875'; box 11, Presidencia, 'Padrón General de los habitantes de todo sexo y edad que forman el pueblo de Huehuetla, 1879'; box 12, Presidencia, Padrón General de los habitantes de esta cabecera, Huehuetla 1891. *Censo de la República Mexicana verificado el 28 de octubre de 1900*. AMZ, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 53. Relativo al Censo General de la República, Municipalidad de Zacatlán, Resumen del Censo General de habitantes de este municipio verificado el mes de Noviembre de 1921'. The local census, which registers disaggregated figures excluded in the national census, has a slightly higher total for the ex-district of Zacatlán than that of *Censo General de Habitantes, efectuado el día 30 de noviembre de 1921* (México, 1921).

<sup>81</sup> On the foundation of the *ranchería* of Xunalpu and its school in 1908 see AMH, box 55, Fomento, 'Exp. no. 10. Relativo a sitios propiedad del Ayuntamiento', Huehuetla 5 Dec 1923.

<sup>82</sup> There are, unfortunately, no population figures available for the smaller villages and hamlets before 1920. For school figures see Appendix Three, Tables 6 to 9.

justice of the peace was always one of the prominent non-Indians of Huehuetla, who were taking advantage of the sale of the Huehuetla commons in the 1890s.<sup>83</sup> As in the *rancherías* attendance figures in Chilocoyo were very modest throughout the Porfiriato. Since 1910 the schoolroom of Chilocoyo became mixed, with girls attending the same classroom as boys, but at different times. This practice had been encouraged in the Sierra since the beginning of the Porfiriato and was found elsewhere in the country. The ideal was to have separate sex schools but as a concession to scarce resources in the smaller villages and hamlets, the practice of boys and girls taking turns was adopted.<sup>84</sup>

### Public Exams and Pueblo Autonomy

In the previous chapter, we saw how exams were public events of political relevance in that they showed the achievements of the towns and villages. In Huehuetla too the public exam was as much a test for the schoolmaster, and even for the local authorities, as it was for the pupils. For the *pueblos*, exams made public in a very tangible manner the failure or success of their educational efforts and their status vis-à-vis the *cabecera*.<sup>85</sup> Below, a dispute in 1885 Caxhuacan additionally shows that *pueblos* sought to preserve their right to organise educational matters by themselves.

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<sup>83</sup> AMH, box 13, 'Libro de actas y acuerdos para el año de 1899', entries for 2 Jan, 4 Sep, 27 Nov and 25 Dec 1899; box 12, 'Libro de actas y acuerdos de la municipalidad de Huehuetla para el año 1892', entry for 15 Dec 1892.

<sup>84</sup> For such 'mixed' schools in Tlaxcala see Elsie Rockwell, *Hacer Escuela*, p. 186.

<sup>85</sup> In the district capital of Zacatlán criticism of public exams was often politically motivated and disputes even made their way to Mexico City's papers, see 'Gacetilla / Exámenes' in *El Progreso de*

At the beginning of the Porfiriato, examinations for the pueblo schools generally took place in the municipal headtown. Eventually, exams began to be held in pueblos to the satisfaction of its authorities, teachers and parents. But the president of the jury was always a notable from the headtown, often a current or past municipal president, or a former secretary or teacher. Generally, the other members of the jury also came from the *cabecera* due to the shortage of qualified people in the villages. Difficulties emerged when the president or other members of the jury were unable to attend. In 1885 Caxhuacan, for instance, exams were postponed because the jury from Huehuetla had been unable to attend.<sup>86</sup> While the authorities in Huehuetla decided that the Caxhuacan exams should take place in the headtown, the schoolmaster and secretary, José María González, protested that this was unfair for pupils and parents who would have to travel. The auxiliary president of Caxhuacan, Gabriel A. Lobato, did not overtly defy the orders of the Totonac municipal president but neither did he carry them out.<sup>87</sup> Eventually Huehuetla got tired of Caxhuacan's foot-dragging and the dispute was settled by the board of school inspection in Zacatlán. The board's president, Angel W. Cabrera, stipulated that the exams would take place in the pueblo

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*Zacatlán*, vol. 2, no. 18, 15 Nov 1883 and Saturnino Téllez, 'Exámenes' in *El Progreso de Zacatlán*, vol. 2, no. 22, 15 Jan 1884. AMH, box 5, *Boletín Municipal de Zacatlán* vol 1, no. 1, 'Memoria de los trabajos emprendidos y llevados a cabo por el Ayuntamiento de 1884', 1 Feb 1885.

<sup>86</sup> The exams for the school year 1884 took place in Caxhuacan on 20 January 1885. AMH, box 5, Instrucción Pública, Exp. no. 6. 'Expediente que contiene siete comunicaciones y documentos relativos a los exámenes de la municipalidad', Huehuetla Jan 1885.

<sup>87</sup> AMH, box 5, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 12. Expediente que contiene dos actas que practicaron los socios del representante del Consejo de Vigilancia en los exámenes públicos que hubo en esta municipalidad', Huehuetla Dec 1885 and 'Exp. no. 5 Expediente que contiene las comunicaciones que mediaron entre este Ayuntamiento y la Junta Auxiliar de Caxhuaca en las determinaciones de los exámenes públicos', Huehuetla 10–11 Dec 1885.

as usual and asked the *Ayuntamiento* to appoint a suitable jury avoiding any further delays.<sup>88</sup>

As an incipient educational bureaucracy grew, the shortage of people with the necessary knowledge and skills necessary to teach and examine children became all the more poignant as it made pueblos dependent on outside knowledge, thus furthering the progressive loss of political autonomy experienced since the 1880s. Interestingly in Caxhuacan, José María González, who, as secretary and schoolmaster, would be expected to conform to the municipal president's decisions and further centralisation, preferred instead to defend the pueblo's right to have its exams at home.

### Inadequate Teachers and Imaginative Pupils

The lack of educated men and women was an acute problem in Huehuetla and its subject pueblos, barrios and rancherías. In contrast to Cuetzalan, which did not suffer from significant shortages during the Porfiriato, in Huehuetla neither the small non-Indian population, nor the large Indian community, could provide enough administrators and teachers. Teachers very frequently were men or women from Zacatlán, which made them more likely to request leave when they needed to go to their hometown. Even those who were from Huehuetla often travelled to Zacatlán for

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<sup>88</sup> AMH, box 5, Presidencia, 'Libro de actas de la municipalidad de Huehuetla para el año de 1885', entries for 14 and 21 Dec 1885 and Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 15. Expediente que contiene documentos oficiales con varias determinaciones al haberse efectuado los exámenes públicos', Huehuetla 16 Dec 1885.

their own business, or, when ill, were forced to do so in order to receive medical services unavailable in Huehuetla.<sup>89</sup> Just the journey took a full day and part of the second.<sup>90</sup> This situation resulted in late openings and early closures at the beginning and the end of the school year, as well as interruptions during the year, thus harming schoolwork.<sup>91</sup> Additionally, as shown in complaints against teachers by local authorities or parents, schoolmasters' knowledge of their subjects and sense of responsibility were sometimes wanting.<sup>92</sup> In a region where sugar cane growing and distilleries were an important part of the economy, male teachers were frequently accused of drunkenness.<sup>93</sup> Female teachers, their reputation at stake for working

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<sup>89</sup> For similar problems in other Mexican Sierras during the Porfiriato see María Bertely, "Panorama histórico de la educación para los indígenas en México" in Luz Elena Galván Lafarga (coord.) *Diccionario de Historia de la Educación en México* (México: UNAM, 2002).

<sup>90</sup> See, for instance, AMH, box 4, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 1 Expediente que contiene las comunicaciones relativas a la Instrucción Primaria por el mes de enero de 1888', Huehuetla 4 Jan 1888 and Zacatlán 5 Jan 1888.

<sup>91</sup> AMH, box 16, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia que manifiesta el número de escuelas de ambos sexos que existen en esta demarcación', Huehuetla 10 May 1897; box 18, Presidencia, Presidente Municipal Federico González to Jefe Político, Huehuetla 2 Feb 1898.

<sup>92</sup> AMH, box 16, Presidencia, 'Expediente que contiene la correspondencia oficial del mes de enero de 1896', Mateo Gaona to Jefe Político, Huehuetla 4 Jan 1896; Jefatura Política to Presidencia de Huehuetla, Zacatlán 31 Jan 1896; Mateo Gaona to Jefe Político, Huehuetla 3 Feb 1896.

<sup>93</sup> AMH, box 13, Presidencia, 'Expediente con la correspondencia de abril y mayo 1896', Mateo Gaona to Jefe Político, Huehuetla 1 May 1896 and 'Expediente... correspondencia oficial por el mes de junio de 1896', Mateo Gaona to Jefe Político, Huehuetla, n.d.; 'Expediente... correspondencia oficial por el mes de Diciembre de 1896', Acta de Examen de la escuela de niños de Huehuetla, 8 Dec 1896 and Resignation of Francisco Torres y Reyes, Huehuetla 19 Dec 1896; box 15, Presidencia, 'Expediente... correspondencia oficial del mes de Octubre de 1897', Pedro Gandía to President of Huehuetla, Zacatlán 16 Oct 1897.

outside the domestic sphere, were prone to accusations of 'immoral' and 'indecent' behaviour.<sup>94</sup>

If teachers' lack of responsibility and continuity hampered students' progress, discipline could also become a matter of contention. Punishments administered by teachers were a source of conflict with parents, and authorities often had to intervene. As seen for the case of San Miguel Tzinacapan's girls' school, parents questioned whether punishments were fair and proportionate to the offence, thus affirming their authority over the teachers. With the constitutional prohibition of corporal punishment, inspectors, in accordance with pedagogical advances, recommended subtler means of disciplining pupils, and parents, whether they approved or disapproved, were only too aware that the cane was now unacceptable.<sup>95</sup> In July 1885 C. Francisco Ramírez, a Totonac villager of Caxhuacan, complained to Francisco de Aquino, municipal president of Huehuetla, that his son José Ramírez, a student at Caxhuacan's boys' school, together with another pupil, had been severely punished for not knowing the lesson. Ramírez protested that the punishment was unfair because

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<sup>94</sup> AMH, box 16, Presidencia, 'Expediente... correspondencia oficial del mes de enero de 1896', Antonio Castañeda to Presidente de Huehuetla, Caxhuacan 5 Feb 1896; 'Exp. que contiene la correspondencia oficial del mes de abril de 1897', Noticia que manifiesta el número de escuelas de ambos sexos que existen en esta demarcación, Huehuetla 10 May 1897; box 13, Presidencia, 'Expediente con la correspondencia de abril y mayo 1896', Antonio Castañeda to Presidente de Huehuetla, Caxhuacan 16 April 1896; Acta de la Sesión extraordinaria de la Junta Auxiliar de Caxhuacan a 24 abril 1896.

<sup>95</sup> For the contemporary educational ideas regarding the softening of discipline see Rosario Águila, *Ligeras consideraciones acerca de la disciplina escolar* (Puebla: Instituto Normalista del Estado- Imprenta Guadalupana, 1904) and Edwin Zollinger, *Enrique C. Rebsamen. El renovador de la instrucción primaria en México*. (Veracruz: Dirección General de Educación, 1957), pp. 63-64. For increasing disapproval of corporal punishment in Mexico City's schools see Verónica Arellano, *La Educación Elemental*, pp. 170-180.



Braulio Baños, the teaching assistant, was continuously absent from school and often went home after giving no more than a brief lesson and long before closing time. In response to Ramírez's complaint, Gabriel A. Lobato, auxiliary president of Caxhuacan, defended the teaching assistant denying that he behaved irresponsibly, stating that José Ramírez and his non-Indian classmate Santa Fé A. Lobato had been disrespectful and deserved punishment. José had persuaded his friend Santa Fé to write an obscene and abusive message (in Totonac) and to address the note to the teaching assistant. Gabriel A. Lobato, who understood Totonac, considered the written insults a serious offence. He acknowledged the children were too young to be jailed and recognised that legislation explicitly prohibited physical punishment. Nonetheless, Lobato believed that this particular case demanded an exception to the rule. It was a bad example to students and harmed the reputation of the school and authorities, so he proposed that each child be caned twelve times.<sup>96</sup>

Gabriel A. Lobato was anxious to assert his authority after Francisco Ramírez had bypassed Caxhuacan authorities and addressed his complaint directly to the municipal president of Huehuetla. Perhaps Ramírez preferred to address Aquino in Huehuetla rather than Lobato in Caxhuacan because Aquino was Totonac like him. However, there is widespread evidence that villagers, when seeking redress and justice, did not go to the pueblo authorities but sought municipal presidents and most frequently *jefes políticos*, regardless of race. A higher authority was approached in hope of a fair resolution of the conflict. Such strategies by protesters obviously harmed the reputation of pueblo authorities. Lobato, then, was under pressure to

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<sup>96</sup> AMH, box 4, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 4. Expediente que contiene la queja que contra el

prove that he knew what the conflict was about and it was in his interest to defend the teaching assistant. As auxiliary president, Lobato was responsible for the good functioning of school and acknowledgement of the teacher's inadequacies would have put him on the spot for not taking any measures. Complaints during the 1890s that teaching assistant, Braulio Baños, was unpunctual, had little inclination for teaching, and suffered from alcoholism, suggest that Ramírez's complaint against Baños was fair.<sup>97</sup>

Moreover, Lobato skirted round the issue of the schoolmaster's responsibility. If doubt had been cast on the adequacy of the assistant, why was the schoolmaster José María González not questioned on the case? González was presumably too busy working as secretary of Caxhuacan and probably delegated most school chores to Baños, to the detriment of teaching and students' progress. Additionally, evidence of Baños' incompetence suggests that when he 'took the lesson' he did so on the basis of mere rote learning rather than with any concern for the students' understanding of the class. Lobato's anxiety to assert his position probably accounts for the excessive punishment he proposed. His argument, that a practice now prohibited by law was acceptable because the severity of the specific case demanded it, was based on colonial rather than liberal reasoning. He acknowledged legislation ruling against his practice but claimed that the specific circumstances justified his non-compliance with the law. For their part, parents found it was the teacher's inadequacy and not the

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ayudante de la escuela municipal de Caxhuaca puso el C. Francisco Ramírez en Julio de 1885'.

<sup>97</sup> AMH, box 15, Presidencia, 'Expediente que contiene la correspondencia oficial del mes de octubre de 1897', Jefe Político Pedro Gandía to President of Huehuetla on School Inspector's report, Zacatlán 16 Oct 1897.

pupils' negligence that hampered learning. On the other hand, their complaints were not merely about teaching quality; authority over their children was at stake too.

Finally, the Caxhuacan school incident gives some insight into life in the classroom. Totonac student José Ramírez probably could not yet write while non-Indian Santa Fé Lobato could. The wholly Spanish-language teaching obviously made it easier for non-Indian children to learn to read and write, yet all children shared the same classroom. Whether in Totonac or Spanish, schoolmates communicated with each other and José asked Santa Fé to write for him in Totonac. If Santa Fé had learned to write, it would not have been necessary for him to know Totonac in order to transform José's Totonac words into written signs. In any case, the incident suggests that children might have learned some of each other's language while attending school and sharing a classroom. The collaboration between José and Santa Fé additionally gives us some hints of what children made of formal education. This case shows imaginative children at work, appropriating the skills learned in school to rebel against a teacher who had little interest in his job. The idea to write in Totonac is a testament to the pupils' creativity since Mexican secular schools, unlike the schools sustained by the Church and the *pueblos de indios* in the colonial period, did not teach the transcription of indigenous languages until the second half of the twentieth century, and even then only in those following bilingual programmes.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> For writing in Indian languages as well as Spanish in the colonial period see Dorothy Tanck de Estrada, *Pueblos de indios y educación*, pp. 412-417, 426-447. As in much of the country, by the turn of the century, the Puebla Church had gained ground and resumed, or had the intention to resume, bilingual indoctrination. See a bilingual Totonac/Spanish Catechism published in 1900, Perfecto Cuevas, *Cartilla de la Doctrina Cristiana en Totonaco. Oraciones para la devoción del santísimo rosario y varias oraciones traducidas al castellano* (Puebla: Tip. de La Misericordia Cristiana, 1900).

The Caxhuacan children's insubordination is also a warning against Foucauldian interpretations of the school as a disciplinary machine where pupils were inevitably subject to domination.<sup>99</sup> Even if educationalists were ready to spot specific instances of student disobedience and suggest strategies to thwart the students' capacity for conspiracy and indiscipline, this very fact also suggests that there was always room for pupils' autonomous action.<sup>100</sup> Moreover, an irresponsible schoolmaster through his negligence allowed all the more room for indiscipline and, potentially, for creativity. On the other hand, the imposition of authority in school was still an issue of concern for adults and, in the case of Caxhuacan, for the local authority. In the absence of a strong educational authority, the auxiliary president stepped in and decided to contradict current pedagogical principles and educational legislation by caning the children.

Fortunately, other more enlightened men than Lobato also exerted their influence on education in the municipality of Huehuetla. Among them was Angel W. Cabrera, author of a reading-writing method which is discussed below, after an overview of the reading primers available in the Porfiriato. The next section explores how children learned to read and write in Porfirian Mexico and then focuses on

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Huehuetla, however, did not seem to have any Catholic schools. As for municipal schools, after the Ripalda Catechism disappeared from school inventories in the 1880s, there is no trace of any other religious texts or catechisms in Huehuetla's schools.

<sup>99</sup> Elsie Rockwell provides further evidence of children's agency in an argument that strongly qualifies 'the prevailing theoretical emphasis on the "disciplining of bodies" and the "production of selves" through schooling'. Elsie Rockwell 'Schools of the Revolution', p. 20.

<sup>100</sup> See, for instance, Tetela-born teacher José María Bonilla's 1905 advice to discipline students, reprinted in Vicente Fuentes Díaz y Alberto Morales Jiménez, *Los grandes educadores mexicanos del siglo XX* (México: Altiplano, 1969), pp.100-107.

Cabrera's method, which was used in Huehuetla. The new methods introduced the simultaneous teaching of reading and writing, putting a stop to a situation in which many left school having learned to read but not to write.<sup>101</sup> However, these textbooks were written only in Spanish and failed to address the Indian children's lack of knowledge of the national language.

### School Books for (Non-Indian) Mexico

According to the inventories available, the schools in the centre of the country from Mexico City through Estado de México and Tlaxcala to the Sierra Norte de Puebla, possessed some of the tools for the uniform education longed for by politicians and educationalists.<sup>102</sup> The same primers were listed by practically all schools. However, only the schools in the municipal seat or the district seat, if any, had as many copies as pupils to work individually with their own books. Most schools had only a few copies of each reader and probably had to resort to the blackboard.<sup>103</sup> A variety of books on geography, history, civics, natural science and other subjects prescribed in primary school programmes were held in much smaller numbers. Generally they only had one copy for the teacher's reference so the few pupils who took those subjects presumably studied from their notes.

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<sup>101</sup> This was reflected in the national census which up to 1940 still listed people who could read but not write, the number of which was very small and had been decreasing throughout the country at least since the Porfiriato.

<sup>102</sup> Milada Bazant, *En busca de la modernidad*. Elsie Rockwell, 'Learning for Life'. Lucía Martínez Moctezuma, 'Los libros de texto en el tiempo' in Luz Elena Galván Lafarga (coord.) *Diccionario de Historia de la Educación en México* (México: UNAM, 2002).

The use of religious textbooks such as the Ripalda Catechism and the Sacred History by Fleuri was widespread in the first half of the nineteenth century; in fact, they were still listed in some school inventories of the 1870s. Even Angel W. Cabrera who, as will be seen below, kept up with the latest pedagogical trends, still taught Christian Doctrine and Sacred History in 1870, most likely using the Ripalda and Fleuri books.<sup>104</sup> Nonetheless, religious education and its corresponding texts became increasingly uncommon and had all but disappeared from municipal schools by the turn of the century.

The schools of the Porfiriato possessed a handful of readers of which the oldest probably was the *Silabario de San Miguel*. This primer still included a simple religious catechism. In order to teach children to read it first introduced the letters, then the syllables and finally words and sentences. It was designed so that pupils first learned to pronounce the names of the vowels and consonants of the alphabet rather than a phonetic system whereby they learned the sounds of each letter. The system of learning the individual letters was called *deletreo* in Spanish, and only after mastering this practice did pupils learn the pronunciation of syllables or *silabeo*.<sup>105</sup> Huehuetla's and Caxhuacan's boys' schools still used the *Silabario de San Miguel* in the early

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<sup>103</sup> Elsie Rockwell, 'Learning for Life or Learning from books', pp. 18-19.

<sup>104</sup> Mary K. Vaughan, 'Primary Schools in the City of Puebla, 1820-1860', *HAHR*, 67:1 (1987), pp. 39-62. Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, p. 20.

<sup>105</sup> On *deletreo* and *silabeo* in the early nineteenth century see Dorothy Tanck de Estrada, *La educación ilustrada 1786-1836* (México: Colegio de México, 1998) pp. 222, 238-240. For a description of the *Silabario de San Miguel* see Milada Bazant, *En busca de la modernidad*, p. 143. The *Silabario*'s author was Nicolás García San Vicente (1793-1845), who had studied at the elementary school at Zacatlán and later moved to Puebla to train as a Jesuit, see José Angel Fabre Baños, *Los*

1880s.<sup>106</sup> However, the type of teaching associated with it would soon come in for widespread criticism.

The key educational reform of the Porfiriato came with the adoption of European pedagogy by educationalists working in Mexico.<sup>107</sup> With their names hispanicised, the Swiss Enrique Rébsamen and German Enrique Laubscher, together with Mexican Carlos A. Carrillo, wrote the first readers advocating the new methods. Laubscher in 1883, Carrillo in 1893 and Rébsamen in 1899 proposed the simultaneous teaching of reading and writing, an innovation that had already been taken up in Europe.<sup>108</sup> Additionally, Carrillo and Rébsamen disapproved of the existing procedure of teaching reading and writing: starting with letters, following with syllables and finally words. Instead, Carrillo proposed to start with sentences, and Rébsamen with words, on the basis that young children initially acquired language by learning sentences or words but not letters or syllables. Having introduced the words, teachers should follow with the pronunciation and writing of syllables and finally letters. This was known as the analytic-synthetic method.

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*prenormalistas poblanos y su influencia en la fundación del Instituto Normal del Estado* (Puebla: SEPBINE, 1990), pp. 16-17.

<sup>106</sup> AMH, box 2, Instrucción Pública, 'Estado que manifiesta el número de alumnos que concurren al establecimiento con expresión de los ramos que abraza su educación', Huchuetla 30 April 1881 and box 3 Instrucción Pública, 'Estado que manifiesta el número de alumnos que concurren al establecimiento con expresión de los ramos que abraza su educación', Caxhuacan 30 April 1882.

<sup>107</sup> Mary K. Vaughan, *The State, Education and Social Class*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>108</sup> The simultaneous teaching of reading and writing was first introduced in France in 1834. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, inspectors still reported cases of use of the old method of successive rather than simultaneous teaching of the three Rs. François Furet and Jacques Ozouf, *Reading and Writing. Literacy in France from Calvin to Jules Ferry* (Cambridge: CUP, 1982), pp. 75-76, 93, 112-114, 132-138.

Additionally, Rebsamen criticised the pronunciation of individual letters and replaced it with a phonetic system.<sup>109</sup>

In 1888, five years after Laubscher's book had first introduced the simultaneous teaching of reading and writing to Mexico, and five years before Carrillo proposed the analytic-synthetic method, Angel W. Cabrera of Zacatlán published a reader following these two innovations. While Cabrera introduced the latest pedagogical advances he also kept exercises and instructions for teachers that were simple enough to be used in the modest village schools of the Sierra.<sup>110</sup> Angel W. Cabrera's reader was used in Huehuetla at least since 1891.<sup>111</sup> The noting of specific book pages for examination suggests instruction was closely based on Cabrera's text.<sup>112</sup> The advantages of Cabrera's book and the results obtained are

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<sup>109</sup> Also part of this educational reform was the end of the 'mutual system' of classroom teaching whereby children were taught one by one and the teacher prepared advanced pupils to instruct the beginners. This was replaced by 'simultaneous' teaching whereby a single teacher instructed a classroom of children with a homogenous level of knowledge. Ernesto Meneses Morales, *Tendencias educativas oficiales en México*, (México: CEE-UIA, 1998), vol. I, pp. 380-392.

<sup>110</sup> The first edition of Cabrera's book is not available but according to Rebsamen it came out in 1888 Enrique Rebsamen *La enseñanza de la escritura y lectura en el primer año escolar. Guía metodológica para maestros y alumnos normalistas*, quoted in Salvador Cruz, *Historia de la Educación en Puebla* (Puebla: BUAP, 1995), vol. 1., pp. 241-242. According to Fabre, Cabrera's book was first published in 1889 in *El Hijo del Ahuizote*, the famous Mexico City newspaper of strong anticlerical and anti-Díaz orientation directed by Daniel Cabrera, nephew of Angel W. Cabrera. José Angel Fabre Baños, *Los prenormalistas poblanos*, p. 12. For a copy of the 1896 edition see the appendix in María del Pilar Cuevas Aguirre, *Historia de la educación elemental en Zacatlán*.

<sup>111</sup> The older reading primers by Mantilla and Rocherolles were also used in Huehuetla but they were less numerous than Cabrera's. The textbooks of the Veracruz pedagogues did not reach Huehuetla's schools.

<sup>112</sup> AMH, box 12, Instrucción Pública, Examen de la escuela de niñas, Huehuetla 4 Dec 1891; box 16, Instrucción Pública, Acta de examen de la escuela de niños Benito Juárez, Huehuetla 27 Nov 1893;



considered below, followed by a discussion of Cabrera's failure to address the language problem.

Angel W. Cabrera found it necessary to cater for a majority of untrained teachers. He considered that even if a teacher did not fully understand the differences between his reading-writing method and the old one, by simply copying the book's exercises, in the old manner, and reading the lessons repeatedly, children would learn to read and write starting with words rather than letters or syllables. Clear and simple instructions indicated to teachers that the pronunciation exercises designed to develop reading, and the copying and writing exercises, were to be done at the same time. Thus the analytic-synthetic method and the simultaneous teaching of reading and writing could be implemented with minimum resources.

The weight of evidence suggests that the simultaneous teaching of reading and writing was not the rule in the early 1880s but did become widespread by the 1890s. In 1881 Huehuetla, for instance, 53 out of 60 boys were learning to read only, using the older primers. The remaining seven pupils were learning to write, continued with reading, and additionally had lessons on arithmetic and some notions of geography. By contrast, at the end of the decade, all of the 80 boys in Caxhuacan were registered to learn to read, write and count. The introduction of simultaneous teaching of the three Rs was no small achievement. Compare, for instance, the state of Tlaxcala which was much closer to Mexico City, and other modernising influences, where the

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'Inventario general de que hace entrega el director provisional C. Gabino Mora al C. Joaquín López Huerta', Huehuetla 8 Jan 1896

school programme of 1898 still prescribed the teaching of reading in the first year, with writing introduced only in the second year.<sup>113</sup>

The introduction of the simultaneous teaching of reading and writing was particularly important in a rural context where most children went to school for only a year. Before the simultaneous method the majority would only have learned to read. By contrast, after the introduction of the new method it was possible for pupils to learn both skills in one year. But who benefited from this improvement? If Indian children could read without understanding the text, as seen in the previous chapter, they could also write, copying from their primers and the blackboard, without knowing the meaning of the words they impressed on the paper. Therefore, the benefits of the simultaneous method might have been undermined by the language question. By contrast, Spanish-speaking children were in a position to take full advantage of the new method. The new school books, including Cabrera's, were unintentionally biased in favour of non-Indian Mexico, widening the gap between Indians and Spanish speakers.

Indeed, for all Cabrera's concern for the adaptation of school programmes to rural settings, we do not find in his writings any explicit discussion of the teaching of the Spanish language itself, whether oral or written, to Nahua and Totonac children in Zacatlán or elsewhere in the Sierra. Cabrera is said to have 'patiently primed his Totonac domestic helpers in reading and writing so that they, in turn, could instruct

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<sup>113</sup> AMH, box 2, Instrucción Pública, 'Estado que manifiesta el número de alumnos que concurren a este establecimiento...', Huehuetla 30 April 1881 and box 3, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 8. Expediente de Noticias Estadísticas de Instrucción Primaria', Caxhuaca 30 Sep 1889. For Tlaxcala see Elsie Rockwell, *Hacer Escuela*, p. 205.

their equals in their communities of origin, just like early missionaries had done in New Spain'.<sup>114</sup> He might have used the native languages to communicate with pupils while teaching the rudiments of reading and writing, which was an advantage over teachers who only knew Spanish, but his manual was clearly conceived to teach to read and write in Spanish, not in any of the Indian languages. Given that Cabrera sought to adapt the latest pedagogical advances to the countryside, probably knew some Nahuatl and Totonac himself, and fiercely defended the educability of the Indian on the pages of *El Eco de Zacatlán*, his disregard of the language problem is somewhat puzzling. But in this Cabrera was not alone. His words and actions were framed by the views of the majority in the wider debate on Indian education. Immersed in the dominant liberalism of the late-nineteenth century, this debate focused on the essential equality of all Mexicans in order to argue in favour of Indian education. At the same time, the liberal mind and its ideal of equality failed to see just how difficult it would be to teach Indian children to read and write in a language that they did not speak. In doing so, liberals hampered the possibilities of national integration through the Indians' learning of the official language. Below we will see how the terms of the debate on Indian education contributed to this result.

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<sup>114</sup> José Angel Fabre Baños, *Los prenormalistas*, pp. 15-16.

## Language and the Indian Question

In a series of brief articles published in *El Eco de Zacatlán* in 1891, Cabrera argued for the feasibility and importance of providing adequate schooling for the 'indigenous race'. Education, together with the improvement of communications and the facilitation of trade, would 'redeem this population which constitutes a very important part of the fatherland'.<sup>115</sup> Cabrera argued that if the Indian population were helped in realising their full potential, no European immigration would be needed for the country's advance. His liberal proto-*indigenismo* recalls the more sympathetic comments on the Indian by politicians, journalists and writers such as Ignacio Ramírez and his disciple Ignacio Manuel Altamirano.<sup>116</sup> Cabrera's more detailed arguments in favour of the educability of the Indian were similar to those of the 1883 polemic on the pages of the official newspaper *La Libertad* between Justo Sierra and Francisco Cosmes.<sup>117</sup> A brief outline of the debate on the Indian question among late nineteenth-century liberals follows.

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<sup>115</sup> Angel W. Cabrera, 'La Raza Indígena', *El Eco de Zacatlán*, 1 Dec 1891 and 15 Feb 1892.

<sup>116</sup> Ignacio Ramírez (1818-1879), a mestizo active in politics and journalism, founded the Literary Institute at Toluca, was Minister of Justice and Public Instruction in 1861, then became a fierce critic of Juárez and in 1879 joined Porfirio Díaz's cabinet as Minister of Justice. Ignacio Manuel Altamirano (1834-1893) was a Nahuatl from Guerrero, studied at Toluca under Ramírez, fought against the French and served official appointments under Díaz. Altamirano wrote political and literary journalism and is best known for his efforts to bring about a national literature. Brading's emphasis on these liberals' disdain of the Indian is perhaps slightly overstated. After all, they both defended the educability of the Indian against those who considered Indians irredeemable and preferred European immigration such as Francisco Cosmes and Francisco Bulnes. David Brading, *The First America. The Spanish Monarchy, Creole Patriots and the Liberal State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 658-674.

<sup>117</sup> The 1883 polemic in the newspaper *La Libertad* is discussed in Martin S. Stabb, 'Indigenism and Racism in Mexican Thought, 1857-1911', *Journal of Inter-American Studies* 1 (1959): 405-423, T. G.

The 1883 polemic commenced with an article by Ignacio Manuel Altamirano praising the educational legislation of the state of Puebla. He underscored the need for Teacher Training Colleges to be opened throughout the country in order to implement a uniform education. Francisco Cosmes attacked the 1883 Puebla regulations and any legislation sanctioning compulsory education with the positivist argument that it was an alien imposition in defiance of the sociological reality of the country. Obligatory education was simply unattainable because of the difficulty of reaching isolated Indian villages. It was also unjust as it deprived the Indian family of the labour provided by children. Ultimately, educational efforts were bound to fail because Indians did not speak Spanish and in any case literacy on its own was unlikely to change their fortune. Justo Sierra, who had proposed a constitutional amendment to make education obligatory, engaged in a polemic with Cosmes arguing in favour of the educability of the Indian. Sierra defended the need for a universal, uniform educational legislation. He argued that the language problem would be solved by instructors learning an indigenous tongue in college as a basis to teach Spanish. For Sierra, the use of Indian languages was temporary, as the ultimate aim was the expansion of Spanish and the extinction of Indian languages in order to bring about the linguistic unification of Mexico. In the First Conference of National Instruction in 1889-1890, Cosmes continued to argue against a uniform education on the basis that the innate intellectual capacities and social conditions of the races living in Mexico differed substantially. But Cosmes' view was unrepresentative and the final report,

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Powell, 'Mexican Intellectuals and the Indian Question, 1876-1911', *HAHR* 48 (1968), pp. 19-36 and Charles A. Hale, *The Transformation of Liberalism in Late Nineteenth-Century Mexico* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), pp. 225-234.

prepared by Enrique Rébsamen among others, defended the imposition of a homogeneous education and stated that Indians were as susceptible of education as the more civilised groups. The language issue, however, received no attention.<sup>118</sup>

This liberal preoccupation with Indian education was also an antecedent of post-revolutionary *indigenismo*. In the debates, a favourite defence of the education of the native population was to mention Benito Juárez, Ignacio Manuel Altamirano and even Ignacio Ramírez –normally described as mestizo–, as Indians who made major contributions to Mexican politics and culture.<sup>119</sup> Their inclusion was a step forward in the building of a positive image of contemporary Indians. Before the 1883 polemic, the most widespread concern for and interest in Indians was limited to the study of past, pre-Hispanic civilisations. In Mexico, as elsewhere in Spanish America, intellectuals recognised past Indian achievements while no connection was made with the Indian present.<sup>120</sup> Justo Sierra and a number of better or lesser known pedagogues, whether interested or not in the pre-Hispanic past, put the problems of contemporary Indians on the agenda. The exaltation of Juárez and Altamirano, needless to say, was very far from accepting any Indian values. These men were exemplary in that, by

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<sup>118</sup> Charles A. Hale, *The Transformation of Liberalism*, pp. 225-234. Martin S. Stabb, 'Indigenism and Racism', p. 415-416. T. G. Powell, 'Mexican Intellectuals', p. 24. Shirley Brice Heath, *La política del lenguaje en México: De la Colonia a la Nación* (México: INI, 1977), pp. 123-126.

<sup>119</sup> Such defence, giving Juárez and Ramírez as examples, was included in the final report of the First National Conference of Instrucción Pública (1889), arguing in favour of compulsory and uniform education. Others who used the same argument included novelist José López Portillo y Rojas in 1906 and Luis Mesa in 1902 as well as a workers' newspaper. T. G. Powell, 'Mexican Intellectuals', pp. 25, 34. Martin S. Stabb, 'Indigenism and Racism', p. 417. Daniel Cosío Villegas, *Historia Moderna de México. El Porfiriato. La Vida Social* (México: Hermes, 1963), p. 152.

<sup>120</sup> Rebecca Earle, "Padres de la Patria" and the Ancestral Past: Commemorations of Independence in Nineteenth-Century Spanish America', *JLAS*, 34:4 (2002), 792-793, 804-805.

leaving their villages behind and receiving a Westernised education, they became acculturated. Schooling might have been provided initially by the Church but eventually they all embraced liberalism and patriotism and joined the minority who developed modern sociabilities. In all cases they were exceptions to the rule of Indian life. It is clear then that the late nineteenth-century liberals who stood for Indian education were in favour of acculturation or Westernisation. They were not interested in the preservation of Indian languages, neither did they conceive of Indian language literacy; some believed it was absolutely necessary to extinguish the native languages for the sake of the country's unity, all wanted the Indian to speak Spanish.

When Angel W. Cabrera sought to refute the view that Indians were incapable of civilisation or not susceptible to instruction, he praised Aztec civilisation, thus joining the common exaltation of the pre-Hispanic past. He then made a point of presenting contemporaries Benito Juárez and Ignacio M. Altamirano as proof of the great potentialities of 'pure-blooded Indians', not only in the distant, pre-Columbian past, but also in the present, thus making a connection between past and present that had rarely been done before. However, insofar as the present of Indian success was limited to those individuals who spoke and wrote in Spanish and had fully embraced liberalism, contemporary Indians were being asked to abandon their existing customs and culture. Sierra could not have made it clearer when he said that the role of the school was to turn the exception of a Juárez into the norm.<sup>121</sup> As historian Nicola Miller has put it 'recognition of past cultural achievement' and, I would add, recognition of present individual achievement, was given in exchange for a

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<sup>121</sup> Justo Sierra, *Obras Completas*, vol. V. *Discursos* (México: UNAM, 1984), p. 441.

‘relinquishment of existing practices and customs’.<sup>122</sup> Moreover, presenting patriotic heroes or prominent intellectuals as ‘good Indians’ was ironically demanding much higher standards for native groups than for non-Indians.

Cabrera possessed an advantage over men like Justo Sierra in living in an indigenous region and experiencing the teaching of Indian children. When considering the argument that education was worthless, given the invincible Indian resistance to it, Cabrera argued that indigenous peoples did not resist education any more than other lower and working class groups. Moreover, when resistance occurred it was often due to inadequate instruction or to teachers using methods inappropriate to the students and conditions.<sup>123</sup> Yet such considerations did not take account of the language issue. Presumably Cabrera found it sufficient that the teacher knew enough of the pupils’ language to explain the basics, and believed that children would learn Spanish in the process of learning to read and write. Perhaps Cabrera ultimately shared Altamirano’s view on the use of Indian languages and the teaching of Spanish, a view that fitted in with the educational legislation of the state of Puebla.

In the article that set off the 1883 Sierra-Cosmes debate, Altamirano, whose mother tongue was Náhuatl, praised the inclusion of this language in the programme for Puebla’s Teacher Training College. He lamented only that other languages had not been included, especially Totonac, given the sizeable population who spoke this language in Puebla. Already in the 1870s, writing for *El Federalista*, Altamirano had argued that teachers should know Indian languages and he chose the Franciscan

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<sup>122</sup> Nicola Miller, *In the Shadow of the State: Intellectuals and the Quest for National Identity in Twentieth-Century Spanish America* (London: Verso, 1999), p. 172.

<sup>123</sup> Angel W. Cabrera, ‘La Raza Indígena’, *El Eco de Zacatlán*, 1 Dec 1891.



missionaries of the sixteenth century, with their keen interest in and publication of native languages, as examples to follow.<sup>124</sup> In these articles, as in the 1883 piece that set off the Indian question debate, Altamirano argued for the study of native languages as an indispensable tool for instructors to teach Spanish but he did not conceive of a programme in *mexicano* (as Náhuatl was often called) or Totonac, nor of any sort of bilingual education. Teachers would merely translate the Spanish words into the native language so that the students understood them and did not suffer greater difficulties than the Spanish-speaking children in the classroom.<sup>125</sup> Although far from the more explicitly nationalistic concerns of Sierra, who was always preoccupied with the excessive heterogeneity of Mexican society, Altamirano still remarked that the great number of languages in Mexico could be a disadvantage in the expansion of education. He did not consider the future of the native languages but he clearly favoured the expansion of Spanish to every inhabitant of the country.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> True to his liberal anti-clericalism, Altamirano hastened to add that, subsequently, the colonial Church and the secular parish priest had exploited rather than educated the masses.

<sup>125</sup> As will be seen in Chapter Six, the use of translation into the native languages would later come under criticism by educationalists who advocated complete immersion in the Spanish language: Gregorio Torres Quintero from 1911 and Ministry of Education (SEP) official Rafael Ramírez in the 1930s. Gloria Bravo Ahuja, *La enseñanza del español a los indígenas mexicanos* (México: Colegio de México, 1977), pp. 92-96.

<sup>126</sup> Ignacio Manuel Altamirano, 'Instrucción Pública. Escuelas Normales en Puebla', *La Libertad* March 1883 in *Homenajes rendidos por los profesores normalistas poblanos residentes en el Distrito Federal a su benemérita escuela, 1950-1952* (México: Biblioteca de la Asociación de Profesores de Puebla, 1953), pp. 75-81. Ignacio Manuel Altamirano, 'La escuela en 1870', 'La escuela del campo', 'El maestro de escuela' and 'La escuela modelo' published in *El Federalista* in 1871-77 and reprinted in Ma. Teresa Bermúdez (ed.), *Bosquejos de educación para el pueblo: Ignacio Ramírez e Ignacio Manuel Altamirano*, (México: SEP-El Caballito. 1985).

In Puebla, it was Guillermo Prieto who proposed the inclusion of Náhuatl in the teachers' training programme, but the measure did not result in better teaching of Spanish in Indian regions. Most of the college's graduates remained in Puebla City or moved to other capital cities where there would be little or no need for their *mexicano*. Many took posts in the growing educational bureaucracy, far from the classroom.<sup>127</sup> The case of Felipe Franco, one of the first graduates of the Puebla College, illustrates how learning Indian languages in college might have helped school inspectors working in Nahua regions but still failed to address the everyday problems of Indian education. Having travelled extensively during his time as state school inspector in 1896-1910, Felipe Franco compiled a dictionary of Nahua toponymy. In 1924 a copy of the manuscript was presented to Pedro Henríquez Ureña who was secretary of education in Puebla during the brief government of Vicente Lombardo Toledano.<sup>128</sup> Henríquez asked the linguist Pablo González Casanova, who had collaborated in Manuel Gamio's Teotihuacan project, for his opinion. González Casanova found that Franco's work showed good knowledge of the subject, even if there were some questionable etymologies, and was at the same time innovative. The research *in-situ*, asking the Indian inhabitants the name of their hometowns, rather than limiting the study to the existing dictionaries, made his work all the more

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<sup>127</sup> See the trajectories of sixteen Puebla College graduates in Eutiquio Bermúdez Peñuela, *Adela Márquez de Martínez, Maestra Ejemplar. Síntesis biográfica* (Puebla: Edición privada, 1985); José Angel Fabre Baños, *Los prenormalistas poblanos*; Rubén A. Gracia, *La Escuela Normal de Puebla* (Author's Edition, n.d.); *SURSUM Revista Mensual*, Year II, No. 17-18, Puebla, Sep 1954.

<sup>128</sup> Pedro Henríquez Ureña is best known as member of the group of idealist intellectuals called *El Ateneo de la Juventud* which included José Vasconcelos and Antonio Caso. Mary K. Vaughan *The State, Education and Social Class*, pp. 239-245. On Lombardo Toledano's government see Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, p. 74.

valuable.<sup>129</sup> Laudable as his work was, Franco did not actually teach children but inspected schools. His reports on the schools in Cuetzalan and Huehuetla in 1907 are similar to others produced at the time. Most of the recommendations addressed the condition of the buildings and furniture, which were generally far from the standard expected of hygiene regulations. Occasionally Franco observed that very few indigenous children attended school in the municipal headtowns. As seen in Chapter Two, during his visit to the girls' school in San Miguel Tzinacapan (Cuetzalan), Franco approved of the formation of a group especially for girls who did not yet speak Spanish. But we do not find further comments on language problems.<sup>130</sup>

By contrast, in 1910 the Indianist Society of Mexico explicitly defended the preservation of Indian languages, proposing the teaching of Spanish as a second language and the publication of instruction manuals in the native tongues.<sup>131</sup> The Society favoured the expansion of Spanish but believed that native languages should first be studied in order to develop the best methods to teach Spanish. For Justo Sierra, then Secretary of Public Instruction, the multiplicity of Indian languages was

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<sup>129</sup> Felipe Franco's manuscript was not published until 1941. Felipe Franco, *Indonimia Geográfica del Estado de Puebla* (Puebla, 1941). For González Casanova's comments see AGEF, box 45, 'Exp. no. 54. Sección de la Dirección General de Educación. Correspondencia particular del jefe del departamento', Pablo González Casanova to Pedro Henríquez Ureña, 3 March 1924. For a brief biography of Pablo González Casanova, see Miguel León-Portilla, *Semblanzas de Académicos. Ediciones del Centenario de la Academia Mexicana* (México, 1975).

<sup>130</sup> AMC, box 103, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 43. Relativo a las visitas que practicó a las escuelas oficiales del municipio el Inspector Felipe Franco' Cuetzalan 18 January 1907. ASMTz, box 79, Presidencia, Inspector Felipe Franco's Report of his visit to the Escuela Carmen Romero Rubio, 15 March 1907. AMH, box 20, Instrucción Pública, Jefe Político to Presidente de Huehuetla (the former reports on Inspector Felipe Franco's visits), Zacatlán 12 June 1907.

<sup>131</sup> Shirley Brice Heath, *La política del lenguaje en México*, pp. 122-126.

an obstacle to the forging of the nation and he saw their preservation as unpatriotic. Sierra censured the Indianists and their bilingual education programme. He probably underestimated the difficulties faced by teachers in implementing a Spanish school programme among children whose first language was not Spanish. But more than anything else, it was Sierra's concern to strengthen the nation by homogenising society that led him to repudiate the preservation of Indian languages. We do not know whether Angel W. Cabrera was aware of the proposals of the Indianist Society or what he would have thought of them, but the Indianists were exceptional in the Porfirian public sphere. The liberal defence of equality, as seen in Ignacio Ramírez, Ignacio M. Altamirano or Angel W. Cabrera, was blind to the differences that made education more difficult for Indian pupils or simply underestimated the complexity of introducing the Spanish language. The positivist stance had its most outspoken representative in Francisco Cosmes who polarised the issue. Instead of realistically observing the difficulties of providing an appropriate education for the Indian, thus taming the naïve optimism of some liberals, and perhaps offering practical solutions, Cosmes took the extreme view that obstacles were so great it was not worth taking the trouble and embellished his cynical pragmatism with racist tones. The casualties of this polarisation of the debate on the Indian question were the teachers and schoolchildren who were left to their own devices. The consequences would provoke dismay among revolutionary educationalists travelling in Indian Mexico. What they found and the accuracy (or inaccuracy) of their assessments will be the subject of the following chapters.

## Conclusions

In the chapter on Cuetzalan we observed that Indian children were more likely to attend schools in the pueblos where non-Indian presence was less harming and more tolerable; hence the relative success of San Miguel Tzinacapan compared to the headtown and San Andrés Tzicuilan. This chapter has shown that in Huehuetla most of the children attending school in the headtown were Totonac. This is partly explained by the fact that non-Indian immigration to Huehuetla started at a later date and the absolute and relative number of non-Indians in Porfirian Huehuetla was smaller than in Cuetzalan. Additionally, throughout the Porfiriato, Indian Huehuetecos participated in the *cabecera*'s administration to an extent that was no longer seen in Cuetzalan after 1888. By force of numbers and of the shorter history of non-Indian presence, at the turn of the twentieth century, Indians in Huehuetla's *cabecera* enjoyed greater autonomy than Indians in Cuetzalan's *cabecera*. I suggest that this greater autonomy resulted in higher school attendance amongst Indians.

However, the Spanish-language school programme was biased in favour of non-Indians. This chapter suggested that this problem was accentuated by the introduction of the simultaneous teaching of reading and writing. The new method facilitated the spread of writing skills, but in failing to address the difficulties experienced by monolingual Indian children, benefited mainly non-Indians. Ultimately, the language problem made the expansive network of schools in the Sierra of little practical use for most Indians, except as a sign of their compliance to the aims of the liberal project and of their status as civilised pueblos.

## Comparisons and Conclusions for Part One

These conclusions bring together the main themes developed in Chapters Two and Three for Cuetzalan and Huehuetla. I first compare these two municipalities with the case of Xochiapulco. Xochiapulco provides an ideal point of contrast because it was the seat of the liberal Nahua leadership of the Sierra from the mid-nineteenth century until the end of the Porfiriato and had a regional reputation for quality education, boasting 44 per cent male literacy, compared to a national average of 27 per cent in 1900.<sup>1</sup>

Drawing on the experience of citizenship and acculturation outlined for each of the municipalities, I explore the different role of public instruction in these communities making the following conclusions: a) in Xochiapulco schools fitted the experience of liberal patriotic citizenship and were therefore successful in increasing literacy and furthering individualization; b) schools in Cuetzalan had a more constrained role because traditional forms of knowledge were much valued, although literacy was useful to the Nahua leaders of the National Guard; and the hybrid (partly modern, partly traditional) form of citizenship that developed in Cuetzalan resulted in greater preservation of Nahua custom; and c) in pueblos such as Huehuetla, which did not participate in the liberal patriotic struggles as soldiers but rather as taxpayers (and which therefore developed a form of citizenship rooted in the long experience of

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<sup>1</sup> All literacy and language figures in this section are taken from *Censo General de la República Mexicana verificado el 28 de octubre de 1900 conforme a las instrucciones de la Dirección General de Estadística* (México: Secretaría de Fomento, 1902).

colonial *pueblos de indios*), schools were more significant in political and symbolic terms than for their practical use.

The second section of these concluding remarks considers how a majority of non-Indians and a handful of Indian caciques in Cuetzalan and Huehuetla came to monopolise bilingualism and literacy, and how schools failed to bring any substantial change in this respect.

**I. Citizenship and Acculturation in the Sierra:**  
**The Role of Schools in Xochiapulco, Cuetzalan and Huehuetla**

Xochiapulco: Liberal Patriotic Citizenship.<sup>2</sup>

Xochiapulco's population were former inhabitants of squatter barrios who joined the National Guard. As a result of their support for the liberal cause, they were granted sufficient land to establish a new municipality. Below we will see the type of citizenship that developed as a result of this experience.

Near the Creole/mestizo-dominated headtown of Zacapoaxtla, from which conservative rebellions sprang throughout the nineteenth century, on the Cuatecomaco ridge, Nahuas lived in three squatter barrios and had to sell their labour to haciendas on the plateau to the south. Led by José Manuel Lucas, the inhabitants of these barrios claimed land from the neighbouring hacienda of Xochiapulco. José Manuel son's Juan Francisco, who had attended school in Zacapoaxtla and later helped his father working in the wool trade across the Sierra in Veracruz, got involved in a land conflict with the hacienda of Xochiapulco, participating in both violent action and the writing of petitions. The dispute only turned in favour of the Nahuas after their successful participation in the Revolution of Ayutla and the

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<sup>2</sup> The following account of Xochiapulco is based on Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*. For briefer accounts of the significance of Xochiapulco and the leadership of Nahua Juan Francisco Lucas see Guy Thomson, 'La republique au village' and David LaFrance and Guy Thomson, 'Juan Francisco Lucas: Patriarch of the Sierra Norte de Puebla'.



fighting against Conservatives and the European intervention as soldiers of the liberal National Guards in the mid-nineteenth century.

Between 1864 and 1874, the hacienda of Xochiapulco was expropriated and granted to the Cuatecomaco Nahuas for their service in the National Guard. Xochiapulco became an autonomous town and municipality with sufficient land for former peons, petty traders and inhabitants of Cuatecomaco's squatter barrios to become autonomous, small farmers who could elect their own municipal authorities. Given that climatic conditions in Xochiapulco were not appropriate for the cultivation of cash crops such as coffee or sugar, there was no incentive for ambitious immigrants to settle in Xochiapulco, a further guarantee of the economic and political autonomy of this Nahua municipality.

The grant of land and the status of municipality, which implied self-government, was a direct consequence of the participation in the patriotic-liberal struggles of the emerging nineteenth-century Mexican nation. Thus autonomy and citizenship in Xochiapulco had a military basis.

Practically all men in Xochiapulco joined the National Guards. The population's experience as squatters and migrants, and later as soldiers who gained respect, land and municipal government because of their military victories, set them apart from the experience of most of the population in the rest of the Sierra. In contrast to the many Indian communities in the region, where cargo systems had developed and their councils of elders performed important leadership and government functions, when the soldiers from Cuatecomaco founded Xochiapulco, the elders who lived in the hamlet of Las Lomas decided to stay away from the

young, liberal National Guard men and joined conservative Zacapoaxtla.<sup>3</sup> In these times of deep transformation, Juan Francisco Lucas and many Xochiapulquenses, already free from the religious cargos of Indian Catholicism, became Methodists. Meanwhile others continued to pray to the old saints, although no Catholic church or priest could be found in Xochiapulco.

Autonomy and citizenship grounded in private property of land, military service, and liberal municipal government without the constraints of compulsory cargo systems, resulted from Xochiapulco's participation in the liberal struggles of the nineteenth century. As will be seen below, this was the ideal context for liberal patriotic education to flourish, and Xochiapulco's population reached a degree of acculturation unusual in the Sierra.

#### Cuetzalan and Huehuetla: A Hybrid Citizenship

In contrast to Xochiapulco, which had obtained economic and political autonomy through the grant of land and municipal status, Cuetzalan was a former *pueblo de indios* which had enjoyed economic and political autonomy.<sup>4</sup> However, by the mid-nineteenth century Cuetzalan suffered increasing encroachment by non-Indian immigrants on their land and administration. Led both by Nahua elders (*pasados*) and

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<sup>3</sup> On rivalry and conflict between Xochiapulco and Las Lomas see: Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 160, 162, 175, 179-180. On the abolition of the council of elders or *pasados* and compulsory services see Guy Thomson, 'La republique au village', pp. 55-56.

<sup>4</sup> On Cuetzalan's acquisition of pueblo status (at some point between the late-seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries) see Bernardo García Martínez, *Los pueblos de la sierra*, pp. 162-163, 282, 287-288.

bilingual and literate National Guard Commander Francisco Agustín Dieguillo, the Indians of Cuetzalan played two cards against the newcomers: local boycott and rebellion against land-grabbers on the one hand, and on the other alliance with the liberals of the Montaña via participation in the National Guard. Leading a number of Nahuas from Cuetzalan, Francisco Agustín Dieguillo participated in the struggles against European intervention in the 1860s including the short-lived victory of 5 May 1862 against the French and the definitive defeat of the invaders on 2 April 1867. Subsequently, they fought in Porfirio Díaz's failed Rebellion of La Noria and the successful Revolution of Tuxtepec, which culminated in the appointment of Montaña leader Juan Crisóstomo Bonilla to the governorship of Puebla.<sup>5</sup>

Having fought alongside the now triumphant Montaña leaders, Dieguillo petitioned to change the conditions for the subdivision of Cuetzalan's communal land, in order to benefit its original inhabitants, and to put an end to the abuses by *gente de razón* and parish priests, who still demanded the compulsory personal services of colonial times. With the mediation of Juan Francisco Lucas, the Nahuas of Cuetzalan managed to retain sufficient land for subsistence agriculture and curbed the non-Indians' ambitions. Similarly to the petitioners of land from the hacienda of Xochiapulco, Dieguillo justified his claims on the basis of military service to the patriotic cause. Yet, while Xochiapulco had started from zero and gained a great degree of economic and political autonomy, unchallenged because of its location in less productive lands, Cuetzalan was trying to reverse the loss of autonomy, or at least

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<sup>5</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan', pp. 205-258.

defend what remained of it, in the face of non-Indians' growing interest in commercial crops, such as coffee, for which Cuetzalan's climate was ideal.

Thus the gains of Cuetzalan were very modest compared to Xochiapulco's. Moreover, they had not been achieved purely on the basis of petitions and military service, but, additionally, with the leadership of traditional authority represented by Nahua elders. Cuetzalan was not ready to abandon customary forms of government and embrace liberalism unconditionally. Francisco Agustín Dieguillo, like Juan Francisco Lucas, experienced the benefits of an education.<sup>6</sup> As municipal president Francisco Agustín showed not only an effective but even a playful command of the Spanish language. While intellectuals discussed whether European immigration or the education of the Indian population was the best strategy to build a prosperous nation, Francisco Agustín was using the best of his Spanish and administrative skills, and a fine sense of irony, to teach Mexico City's politicians a lesson.<sup>7</sup> In June 1880 Zacapoaxtla sent a federal government circular which enquired whether there was any free land for a colony of 100 European immigrants to settle. Francisco Agustín duly

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<sup>6</sup> The wording of the letters signed by Francisco Agustín Dieguillo suggests they were written by somebody whose first language was not Spanish. Dieguillo probably wrote them himself. They have a peculiar style. A defiant character simulating compliance can be seen in the irony behind some of his letters to higher authorities. This is confirmed by Dieguillo's actions when outwitting authorities. For Dieguillo's deceiving tricks, see Pablo Valderrama and Carolina Ramírez, 'Resistencia étnica y defensa del territorio en el Totonacapan serrano: Cuetzalan en el siglo XIX' in Antonio Escobar (coord.) *Indio, Nación y Comunidad en el México del siglo XIX*. (México: CEMC-CIESAS, 1993), p. 199. See also transcriptions of letters in Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan'.

<sup>7</sup> On the debate on European immigration in the late-nineteenth century see Charles A. Hale, *The Transformation of Liberalism*, 219-238 and for the earlier period see Charles Hale, *Mexican Liberalism in the Age of Mora*, pp. 179-180, 211-212, 240-241.

replied, not with an ordinary report in simple writing, but one embellished in the type of calligraphy that cost so many tears to nineteenth-century schoolchildren.<sup>8</sup> After a longwinded title typical of contemporary official correspondence, the document reported the availability of land in the municipality of Cuetzalan. A table outlined the name of every village and hamlet under Francisco Agustín's jurisdiction, and the availability of land in each of them in two parallel columns. One entry after the other, next to the locality's name, in the 'land' column, all read in large letters and elegant writing 'There Is None'.<sup>9</sup> Francisco Agustín fulfilled his duty to reply to the higher authorities, at the same time he made his message clear.

But for all of Dieguillo's playfulness with the documents of the administration, the Nahua population of Cuetzalan, unlike Xochiapulco, felt under threat. While local non-Indian officials reported on the state of schools in the municipality in 1877, Francisco Agustín petitioned for better conditions for *desamortización* and to end exploitative *servicios personales*. During his time as municipal president (1877-1887), he did not supervise or encourage schooling in the manner of Juan Francisco Lucas. Although he found Spanish literacy very helpful, Francisco Agustín valued traditional forms of education provided by the peasant family, including early participation in cargo systems. After all, he had collaborated with the Nahua elders during the local rebellions of the previous decades. Valuing the traditional knowledge transmitted by Nahua community and the peasant family,

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<sup>8</sup> Interview with Sergio Oscar Gutiérrez, Xochiapulco 4 Feb 2002.

<sup>9</sup> AMC, box 10, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 84. Circular relativa a terrenos para establecer una colonia', Cuetzalan 24 June 1880. I thank Emma Gutiérrez, archivist for Cuetzalan, for drawing my attention to this document and Francisco Agustín Dieguillo's sense of irony.

Francisco Agustín understood Indian reluctance to send children to school and avoided fining the parents of absentee children.<sup>10</sup> The school in Cuetzalan would not have the influence it did in Xochiapulco.

In contrast to Xochiapulco's and Cuetzalan's participation in the liberal military effort, in the pueblos where they did not join the National Guard, the contribution to the Liberal cause came in the form of cash and food supplies.<sup>11</sup> This was the case for San Miguel Tzinacapan (Cuetzalan) and for most of the Totonac communities of the semi-tropical sierra, including Huehuetla. Petitions from Huehuetecos, and, ultimately, their justification for citizenship, were based on taxes rather than military service.

Non-Indian land encroachment in Huehuetla followed that of Cuetzalan and the division of communal land started belatedly in the 1890s. Non-Indian abuse of *desamortización* provoked discontent. Like Cuetzalan, Huehuetla showed evidence of strong cargo systems and leadership of elders. Yet no rebellion took place. Unlike the Cuetzaltecos of the 1860s and 1870s, the Huehuetecos of the late Porfirato could no longer count on a strong Montaña party to protect their interests, even if they had had the means to establish the right connections with the Liberals in Tetela and Xochiapulco. The best of Nahuatl popular liberalism did not reach Totonac Huehuetla.

By the turn of the twentieth century, non-Indians had made great advances in Huehuetla and had finally managed to occupy the municipal presidency. Yet, compared to the situation in Cuetzalan, non-Indian Huehuetecos remained divided and had to negotiate with a stronger Indian elite, who possessed a few bilingual and

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<sup>10</sup> See Chapter Two, Section II.

literate members. Despite land conflicts that often pitted Indians against non-Indians, Totonac caciques harnessed support from the majority Indian population for the running of the administration. In this manner, the Chicontepec tax was paid punctually with old schools sustained and new schools opened during the Porfiriato, just as was done in Cuetzalan and, more successfully, in San Miguel Tzinacapan.

As will be seen in Chapter Six, the Totonac belief that their entitlement to political rights was grounded in taxation surfaced during a crisis in the 1925 *Ayuntamiento*. Totonacs claimed their right to elect their own authorities in a plebiscite, excluding non-Indians, on the basis of specifically Indian, economic contributions: head taxes (including school taxes) and personal services of colonial origin. For Totonacs in Huehuetla, as for many other Indian pueblos throughout the Sierra, the first and foremost link with the State came through taxation. Thus, their political identity was defined in fiscal terms and was thereby connected to a long history of tribute and head taxes. Public instruction was not so much about learning to read and write and reciting the deeds of patriotic heroes. It was the funding and maintenance of schools through the payment of taxes that counted, showing the population's commitment to the state's educational policies and guaranteeing the pueblo's respectability, independent of the usefulness of the education provided by the school.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 15, 75-76, 122.

<sup>12</sup> For examples that suggest schools had a strong political role in Indian Tlaxcala and Guerrero, see Yvette Nelen, 'Summary' in the same author's *De illustere heren van San Pablo. Lokaal bestuur in negentiende-eeuws Mexico / Tlaxcala, 1823-1880* (Leiden: CNWS, 1999), p. 345. Peter Guardino, 'Barbarism or Republican Law? Guerrero's Peasants and National Politics, 1820-1846', *HAHR*, 75:2 (1995), p. 206.

While paying similar teachers' salaries for their schools, at the turn of the twentieth century, Xochiapulco had 44 per cent male literacy, Cuetzalan 20 per cent and Huehuetla 13 per cent. Moreover, in Cuetzalan and Huehuetla, in contrast to Xochiapulco, most of this literate population was non-Indian.

### The Uses of Literacy and the Role of Schools in Acculturation

The use of an education was self-evident to Juan Francisco Lucas and many Xochiapulquenses. Starting as proletarianised peasants squatting on private estates and forced to find work further afield, bilingualism and literacy had contributed crucially not merely to starting a land conflict via petitions but also to establishing effective relationships with liberals at regional and national levels, which would culminate in the foundation of Xochiapulco.

If liberal caciques and caudillos may often be accused of merely paying lip service to the liberal legislation on education, Juan Francisco Lucas was not one of them. Although all municipal authorities in the Sierra sustained schools through the payment of the Chicontepec tax, Xochiapulco clearly went further. Throughout his life, Lucas oversaw the running and maintenance of the schools in the municipality and donated land that produced revenue to sustain and improve them.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, Lucas actively encouraged authorities and Xochiapulquenses to send their children to

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<sup>13</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 268-274.



school and took many godsons and goddaughters under his roof to facilitate their education.<sup>14</sup>

During the Porfiriato Xochiapulco's education additionally benefited from the presence of Manuel Pozos. Schoolmaster from 1885 to 1912, Pozos was educated at the Methodist College in Puebla City and promoted a patriotic liberalism with an indigenist tone, including epic accounts of the liberation of the Indian population from tyranny, and elaborate ceremonies in honour of Benito Juárez. Although civic festivals took place throughout the Sierra, the celebrations organised in Xochiapulco went a step further in encouraging families to gather for patriotic reading at home, including fragments from Pizarro's constitutional catechism. A contemporary commentator from Puebla City observed that Pozos ran 'the best school for indigenous peoples in the country'.<sup>15</sup> Indeed Xochiapulco's was the only school in the Porfirian Sierra to possess a small museum and library, and a plot for agricultural practice. It is clear that Pozos had the knowledge and disposition to implement the ambitious programmes of liberal education. In his success, he anticipated key features of the post-revolutionary rural school, with its increased penetration of communities and control of individuals. Pozos additionally introduced the latest pedagogical trends

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<sup>14</sup> Interview with Sergio Oscar Gutiérrez, Xochiapulco 4 Feb 2002.

<sup>15</sup> The quotation is from Enrique Juan Palacios, *Puebla, su territorio y sus habitantes* (México: Talleres Gráficos de la Secretaría de Fomento, 1917), p. 342. On Pozos see also Enrique Cordero y Torres, *Historia Compendiada del Estado de Puebla*, (México: Bohemia Poblana, 1965), vol. III., pp. 140-141; *Biografía del Notable Maestro Autodidacta Don Manuel Pozos* (Anonymous undated manuscript, Xochiapulco); Jean Pierre Bastian, *Los disidentes: sociedades protestantes y revolución en México, 1872-1911* (Mexico: Colegio de México, 1989), pp. 169, 220; Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 20-21, 42, 178, 310-311.

to Xochiapulco and sought to further spread them via a Society of Teachers, founded in 1885.

If anywhere in the Sierra the careful registration of students' names and marks contributed to the identification, individualisation and control of the future citizens, it was in Xochiapulco. The school records kept by Pozos corresponded with absolute precision to state legislation and regulations.<sup>16</sup> More ambitiously, the Xochiapulco's Society of Teachers proposed that, in order to determine the character of each student, schools use Binet's psychological register, as recommended by *México Intelectual*, a pedagogical journal with national distribution.<sup>17</sup> Although already discussed by Mexico's most prominent educationalists, Binet's registers and his future intelligence tests would only be adopted and recommended by the Mexican educational bureaucracy in the 1920s.<sup>18</sup> As the only voluntary association of teachers in the Sierra during the Porfiriato, Xochiapulco's Society of Teachers provided a space for discussion of pedagogical journals and of the teachers' own problems in the classroom. But the notion of schoolchildren that these teachers were possibly imagining involved no differentiation between Spanish and Nahuatl speakers.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Manuel Pozos, *Crónica de esta escuela*, Xochiapulco, 1904. (A copy of this manuscript was kindly provided by Guy Thomson). *Reglamento Económico de las Escuelas Primarias Elementales del Estado de Puebla* (Puebla: Imprenta de la Escuela de Artes y Oficios, 1894), Cap. IX. De los libros y registros, pp. 39-40.

<sup>17</sup> Irma Leticia Moreno Gutiérrez, 'La prensa pedagógica en el siglo XIX' in Luz Elena Galván Lafarga (coord.) *Diccionario de Historia de la Educación en México* (México: UNAM, 2002).

<sup>18</sup> On the adaptation of Alfred Binet's registers to Mexican children in the 1920s see Patience Schell, 'Nationalizing Children Through Schools and Hygiene: Porfirian and Revolutionary Mexico City', *The Americas* 60:4 (2004), pp. 572, 580.

<sup>19</sup> By 1894 the Society had expanded to 20 members (12 men and 8 women). They were Protestant and taught in the Sierra districts of Zacapoaxtla, Tlatlauqui and San Juan de Los Llanos. 'Noticia de los

Consistent with the liberal and republican ideology which was dominant among the urban intellectual elite and blind to any possible ethnic differences, the Xochiapulco Society of Teachers, like Zacatlán educationalist Angel W. Cabrera, made no mention whatsoever of the language obstacles they must have faced when instructing speakers of indigenous languages. The admission that 'greater difficulties' were found when teaching the beginners' course or first grade (*curso inferior*), which was probably a crash course in Spanish for Indian children, together with the decision to discuss the subject of '*Lengua Castellana*' for five days (arithmetic or history were discussed for only one day each), suggests that there was indeed a language problem to tackle.<sup>20</sup> Even in liberal patriotic Xochiapulco, and despite the high literacy, only 14 per cent of the population was registered as Spanish speakers, similar to the 12 per cent of Huehuetla. As Indians throughout the Sierra faced a linguistic disadvantage, non-Indians gained the upper hand. Accommodations reached between them are considered below.

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trabajos llevados a cabo por la Sociedad de Maestros de Xochiapulco', *Periódico Oficial del Gobierno del Estado de Puebla*, tomo LV, no. 32, 11 Sep 1894.

<sup>20</sup> 'Noticia de los trabajos llevados a cabo por la Sociedad de Maestros de Xochiapulco', *POEP*, tomo LV, no. 32, 11 Sep 1894.

## **II. The Monopoly on Bilingualism and Literacy**

As was seen in the case of Tzinacapan in 1875, Indian villagers often showed active resistance to the intervention of the non-Indian secretary in their affairs. They sometimes managed to curb the worst excesses of these caciques, often by taking advantage of factionalism within the non-Indian elite. Nonetheless, Indian villages like Tzinacapan failed to break the monopoly of administrative skills and intercultural communication held by the non-Indian secretary. Given the loss of autonomy that Indian pueblos suffered due to a lack of skills, why do we not find more Nahua men capable of running administrative affairs? Was it a strategic failing of Nahua pueblos that they did not recognise the importance of such skills or was it the result of deficiencies in schooling?

The situation in Huehuetla was less clear-cut because there were a number of bilingual and literate Totonac caciques who participated in the town council and had an important role as mediators between the expanding non-Indian commercial and administrative elite, on one hand, and the majority Totonac population on the other. Yet these Totonac caciques faced increasing encroachment from non-Indians. Although the Totonac elite was losing ground due to the non-Indians' greater economic power, those who had Spanish as their mother tongue probably reinforced their economic power with more effective linguistic and administrative abilities, which in turn provided better connections with authorities and caciques at higher

levels.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, as will be discussed in the second part of this thesis, Totonacs who did not participate in council government came to realise that their lack of skills put them at the mercy of the Totonac and non-Indian authorities.

Below I consider the factors that stopped the Indian population from breaking the monopoly of bilingualism and literacy exercised by non-Indian secretaries in Tzinacapan, and by a combination of Totonac and non-Indian caciques in Huehuetla.

### The (In)Efficiency of Schools

Despite the existence of seven schools at the beginning of the Porfiriato and fourteen at the turn of the twentieth century, most children in the municipalities of Cuetzalan and Huehuetla remained unschooled. Literacy rates rose only marginally. Moreover, it is unclear whether those who attended school, or who were registered in censuses as 'literate', acquired basic skills such as knowledge of the Spanish language, the capacity to write a letter or to work out the bill for a simple economic transaction. Many might have barely learned to sign their names.

Let us consider first why the majority remained unschooled and, secondly, whether school made a difference to the minority who attended. The very low attendance is to a great extent explained by the population's reluctance to register

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<sup>21</sup> Even when regional caciques were Indian, Spanish-speakers might have been in a better position than Totonac authorities in Huehuetla because the most important Indian caciques in the Sierra (Juan Francisco Lucas until 1917 and Gabriel Barrios thereafter) were Nahuas, not Totonacs. And although there existed Nahuat-Totonac bilingualism in the sixteenth century, there is no evidence to believe that this existed in the period studied here. Thus, in interethnic contexts Spanish was the *lingua franca*.

children in school and to allow or oblige them to attend regularly. As has been observed by historians and anthropologists, the economic and social organisation of the peasant family deterred school attendance. When the main economic unit was the peasant household, children performed agricultural and domestic tasks from an early age. School attendance interfered with this family division of labour and was an investment that few were either capable of or ready to make. In this context, even for the more prosperous, it made sense to send to school only the children who were more intellectually inclined, or the physically weakest who could not carry out agricultural or domestic tasks.<sup>22</sup> As in other rural areas, in the Sierra there was a limited demand for literate and educated people. Generally, both in families and the community as a whole, an elementary education was not seen as complementary to a life dedicated to agriculture or trade, but as a substitute for these economic activities. Those who attended school for more than one or two years would become secretaries, scribes, treasures or teachers.<sup>23</sup> Non-Indian distillery and coffee-processing plant owners, traders and administrators generally sent some and occasionally all of their

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Isabel Kelly and Angel Palerm, *The Tajín Totonac* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution. Institute of Social Anthropology, 1952), pp. 6-7.

<sup>22</sup> Elsie Rockwell, 'Schools of the Revolution: Enacting and Contesting State Forms in Tlaxcala, 1910-1930' en Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniel Nugent (eds.) *Everyday Forms of State Formation*, p. 198. Elsie Rockwell, 'Keys to Appropriation: Rural Schooling in Mexico in Bradley A. Levinson, D.E. Foley, and D.C. Holland, (eds.), *The Cultural Production of the Educated Person: Critical Ethnographies of Schooling and Local Practice* (New York: Suny Press, 1996), p. 308. Oscar Lewis, *Life in a Mexican Village: Tepoztlán Restudied* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), pp. 100-112, 296, 389-398.

<sup>23</sup> Miguel Osorio Sierra, 'Familia, organización y trabajo' and Antonio Vázquez Carreón, 'Una experiencia de explotación' both in Eduardo Almeida Acosta y María Eugenia Sánchez Díaz (eds.) *Conocimiento y Acción en Tzinacapan*, pp. 104-106 and 144-151.

children to school.<sup>24</sup> Indian children who attended school most likely came from the more prosperous families, sons of the more enterprising Indian caciques and the *mayordomos* who sponsored the most expensive religious festivals.<sup>25</sup>

Yet, at the turn of the century, it was clear that the administrative and teaching posts that required skills taught at school were occupied mainly by non-Indians, especially in Cuetzalan, where non-Indian immigration started at an earlier date, but also to a considerable extent in Huehuetla. With a Spanish-speaking environment at home non-Indians were able to get more out of their school years. Even those who did not attend might have been taught by parents at home. Indians could, of course, have been taught by their parents whenever they had the knowledge, but when they did not, the Indian child depended entirely on what the school could offer. And it was at this point that Nahuas and Totonacs, facing the language barrier, were clearly at a disadvantage.

The fact that during the period of study all teachers in Cuetzalan and Huehuetla were non-Indian suggests an explanation for the disadvantages to Indians in schools.<sup>26</sup> One could argue that teachers had no real interest in transmitting knowledge to Indian pupils or providing them with useful skills. It was in the interests of non-Indians to keep the number of bilingual and skilled people at the lowest possible level. The position of the nineteenth-century secretaries and teachers of the

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<sup>24</sup> This would include, for instance, the Flores family in Cuetzalan and the Mora family in Huehuetla: see Chapters Five and Six for the role of these families in the economic, political and intellectual life of their respective municipalities.

<sup>25</sup> This was the case for Nahuas in Huejutla, see Frans J. Schryer, *Ethnicity and Class Conflict in Rural Mexico* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 95-96.

Sierra municipalities bore a strong parallel to that of the late colonial Creole priests as recounted by Dorothy Tanck and Eric Van Young. Creole priests (and presumably mestizo priests too) knew the Indian language of their parish and used this knowledge to their advantage over Spanish priests who were not versed in native languages. When Charles III promoted the teaching of Spanish in *pueblos de indios* with the purpose of eliminating native languages, Creole priests opposed such policy for fear of losing their comparative advantage.<sup>27</sup> Universal knowledge of Spanish threatened their role and power as mediators between monolingual Indians and Spanish-speaking higher authorities. Because of their position in nineteenth-century Sierra societies, it was not in the interest of the schoolmasters (who were often secretaries and treasurers or were, in any case, allied with them) to facilitate Indian education, thus undermining their own monopoly of bilingualism and control of administration. They might have merely maintained a semblance of teaching and learning, as in the simulation of reading described in Chapter Two, in order to keep their jobs, remaining indifferent (or even opposed) to the effective learning of their Indian pupils.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> The case of a Nahuatl music teacher in San Miguel Tzinacán was an exception. See Chapter Four, Section I.

<sup>27</sup> Dorothy Tanck, *Pueblos de Indios y Educación*, pp. 168-189. For opposition to the teaching of Spanish in the curate of Tecali (southeast Puebla) see Eric Van Young, *The Other Rebellion. Popular Violence, Ideology and the Mexican Struggle for Independence, 1810-1821* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 479.

<sup>28</sup> For a fictionalised account of a Porfirian teacher-secretary, portrayed as an exploitative cacique who kept a semblance of learning among his Indian pupils in order to impress the authorities see B. Traven, *Government* (London: Allison and Busby, 1980), pp. 33-43.



Yet there is no need to demonise the non-Indian schoolmaster in order to explain the fact that Indians benefited little from the existence of the schools which they paid for via the Chicontepec tax. Some teachers must have taken their jobs seriously and done their best to instruct Indian children. Whether teachers made an effort or not, an explanation for the schools' failure to provide useful skills for Indians may be found in the organisational aspects of Porfirian liberal education and the language context of these communities, as explored in Chapters Two and Three.

Using the new methods for reading and writing discussed in Chapter Three, teachers found it easy to instruct Indians in these skills but did not necessarily teach them the Spanish language. As seen in Chapter Two, many merely learned to pronounce words in Spanish in a given text, without understanding what they were reading. While this allowed them to sit exams and participate in the patriotic oratory of civic festivals, when they left school they generally found little use for their skill and inevitably forgot what they had learnt. Even when teachers tried to teach spoken Spanish before reading and writing, as may have happened in some of the Indian-only schools outside the *cabeceras*, the fact that the children had few or no opportunities to practice the Spanish language outside the classroom, and that they stayed in school typically for one year and at the most for three years, meant that there was simply no chance or time for students to learn the national language with sufficient competence to become secretaries, scribes, treasurers or teachers.<sup>29</sup> Spanish-speaking children, by

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<sup>29</sup> Moisés Sáenz, *Escuelas federales en la Sierra de Puebla*, pp. 83-89, 93-94; Moisés Sáenz, 'Sobre la Creación de un Departamento de Asuntos Indígenas' in Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán (ed.) *Antología de Moisés Sáenz* (Mexico: Ediciones Oasis, 1970), pp. 144-145; Moisés Sáenz, *Carapán* (Michoacán: Gobierno del Estado, 1969), pp. 37, 58, 119-127, 140, 207-208. On children's short stay in school see also Chapter Six, Section II; Narciso Bassols, 'Declaraciones sobre la jira a la Sierra Norte de Puebla

contrast, had a much greater chance of acquiring literacy skills for life, even if they only attended for a couple of years.

In other words, only the wealthier Indians, whose parents might have been bilingual and involved in trade with non-Indians, and the more gifted, such as Juan Francisco Lucas, managed to acquire useful skills from schooling and put them to effective use.<sup>30</sup> Thus, at the turn of the twentieth century, we find a situation in which bilingualism and literacy were practically monopolised by a handful of mestizos in Cuetzalan, and a few Totonac caciques plus an increasing number of non-Indians in Huehuetla. Interpreters were commonly used in the administration and justice. They were generally mestizos who understood and spoke the local Indian language. Only occasionally in Cuetzalan and possibly more frequently in Huehuetla, did prominent Indians act as interpreters.<sup>31</sup>

Whether one considers Porfirian schools efficient or inefficient depends on the criteria by which they are judged. If they were there to educate a small, male non-Indian elite and the exceptionally acculturated or gifted male Indian, then they fulfilled their role. Unsurprisingly, if we impose a criterion of class, ethnic and gender equality to evaluate them, they were a failure.

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(28 de marzo de 1932)' in Antonio Luna Arroyo (ed.) *La obra educativa de Narciso Bassols. Documentos para la historia de la educación pública en México* (Mexico: Editorial Patria, 1934); Elsie Rockwell, 'Keys to Appropriation'.

<sup>30</sup> For Lucas's background see Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, p. 41.

<sup>31</sup> AMC, box 14, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 66. La Jefatura Política remite un ocursio...', Cuetzalan 10 June 1882.

## Weapons of the Weak

Let us further explore why the Indian population was unable to appropriate the non-Indian tools provided by the school. The existence of Indian regional caciques demonstrated that bilingualism and literacy could be useful skills in political life. Why were there not more Lucases or Dieguillos? And to what extent was the Indian population hampered by monolingualism and illiteracy? As seen in Chapter Two, lack of linguistic administrative skills among Nahuas to run municipal and pueblo government in Cuetzalan, resulted in their dependence on mestizo secretaries. Monolingual and illiterate Indians had difficulties fulfilling the requirements of liberal state administration. In seeking to preserve a degree of autonomy, pueblos developed double administrations with elected Indian authorities, who were generally illiterate, and non-Indian secretary-treasurers-schoolmasters who were in charge of all the pueblo's correspondence and official documents.<sup>32</sup> In light of this fact, one could argue that non-Indians exerted complete domination over Indian authorities and population, based on their control of regional commerce and administration, and greatly aided by their superior skills including the command of the national language, literacy and numeracy. However, Indians developed a *modus vivendi* by which they managed to exercise various forms of control and vigilance over non-Indian

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<sup>32</sup> On the perseverance of this arrangement in the 1920s see Moisés Sáenz, *Escuelas federales en la Sierra de Puebla*, pp. 81-83.

secretaries. Additionally, as will be seen below, they sometimes used their own monolingualism and illiteracy to their advantage.

The appointment of treasurer for San Miguel Tzinacapan in 1888 serves as an example of how Nahuas preserved their forms of government at the same time they adapted to the intervention of the non-Indian secretary. As had been the case in previous years, an unqualified but reliable Nahua man took the post as part of his service to the pueblo but he was only treasurer in name. A former mestizo secretary was the *de facto* treasurer who kept the funds and the books. The arrangement came to light when the *jefatura política* imposed a fine for not sending the treasury accounts on time. Juan Antonio, President of Tzinacapan, sent a letter (probably penned by the mestizo secretary) to the President of Cuetzalan:

Antonio Muñoz, former secretary of this town, is now the treasurer because Miguel Mariano, formally in charge, does not have the knowledge necessary for the post. As the municipal council and the district administration are aware, the majority of residents in this town and other towns within the municipality are indigenous people who have not received any instruction. They accept the posts to demonstrate obedience to authorities and to be in some way useful to the community. For these reasons, Antonio Muñoz should be made responsible for the fine imposed by the district administration. He is better informed than anyone else on all treasury regulations and procedures since he was secretary in this town until 31 March last and municipal secretary [in Cuetzalan] from then on. Moreover, his work has been remunerated according to the agreement reached with the treasurer Miguel Mariano.<sup>33</sup>

The *jefatura política* sanctioned the peculiar arrangement by deciding to fine the *de facto* treasurer Antonio Muñoz. The nominal treasurer, Miguel Mariano, possibly performed a role of vigilance, trying to prevent any abuses by Muñoz. But while

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<sup>33</sup> AMC, box 27, Presidencia, Circular XVII, Cuetzalan 19 May 1888.

Muñoz actually kept the books, Miguel Mariano could not even read them. It is examples like this which contribute to simplistic accounts of Indian exploitation and victimisation. Yet a closer look at pueblo practices provides a more nuanced picture. The fact that non-Indian administrators depended on the Indian population for tax collection, the smooth running of government and, not least, in the case of secretaries, teachers and treasurers, for their own salaries, meant that there were limits to abuse. For instance, in 1885, when a new council hall was under construction, the authorities of Tzinacapan called the population to a meeting at which the treasury's accounts were presented, explaining carefully in Nahuatl what the pueblo's income and expenses had been. This is not to say that there was always a transparent running of the administration, but if authorities wanted to demand further money or labour for public works from the population, they had to present accounts and justify the need to demand further support from villagers.<sup>34</sup> When corrupt administrators abused Indian monolingualism and illiteracy to present faked documents, claiming that villagers had agreed to provide a certain service or make some pecuniary contribution, such abuses did not go uncontested and the population often found redress.<sup>35</sup>

As well as finding ways to control non-Indian abuses, in spite of their lack of linguistic and administrative skills, the Indian inhabitants of the Sierra found some advantages in monolingualism and illiteracy. For the central highlands of Chiapas in the 1920s, Jan Rus has found that monolingualism among local authorities was seen

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<sup>34</sup> ASMTz, box 35, Presidencia, Libro de sesiones de la junta auxiliar de Tzinacapan, entry for 25 July 1885.

<sup>35</sup> AMC, box 77, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 61. Relativo al informe que se dio de la queja de algunos vecinos de Tzicuilan', 17 May 1902.

as a guarantee of their loyalty to local interests. Indian villagers were reluctant to appoint bilingual men to represent them.<sup>36</sup> No explicit rejection of bilingualism has been found in Cuetzalan or Huehuetla but villagers and the elders who made decisions might similarly have feared that bilingual authorities would betray them. In any case, villagers commonly made active use of monolingualism and illiteracy to pursue their interests.<sup>37</sup> They did so by alleging miscommunication whenever it was convenient. Petitions and complaints by Nahua peasants had to be written in Spanish, and they were generally written by secretaries or scribes who interpreted the words of illiterate villagers. The final letter would be read aloud to the protesters for ratification. But even after the reading, confusion deriving from translation, or from the scribe's interpretation of petitioners' grievances, could provoke problems.<sup>38</sup> Misunderstandings became an excuse for complainants to withdraw charges whenever they wanted to avoid responsibility.<sup>39</sup> When the letter was an agreement committing the signatories to provide a service or make a payment, problems derived from translation or illiteracy could be cited in order to evade responsibility.<sup>40</sup> In this

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<sup>36</sup> Jan Rus and Robert Wasserstrom, 'Civil-religious hierarchy in central Chiapas: a critical perspective', *AE*, 7:3 (1980), p. 473. Jan Rus, 'The "Comunidad Revolucionaria Institucional": The Subversion of Native Government in Highland Chiapas, 1936-1968' in Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniel Nugent (eds.) *Everyday Forms of State Formation*, pp. 269-271.

<sup>37</sup> For further cases of Indians' use of illiteracy to their advantage see Mark Thurner, *From Two Republics to One Divided*, p. 39.

<sup>38</sup> For such problems of interpretations between scribes and their illiterate customers in contemporary Mexico see Judith Kalman, *Writing on the Plaza: Mediated Literacy Among Scribes and Clients in Mexico City* (New Jersey: Hampton Press, 1999).

<sup>39</sup> AMC, box 23, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 73. Ocurso presentado en la Jefatura Política por el C. Juan Bautista Hernández vecino de Tzicuilan', July 1886.

<sup>40</sup> AMC, box 17, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 99. Contiene un acta que se levantó en el pueblo de Tzicuilan', Aug. 1883.

manner monolingual Nahuas on some occasions used ignorance of the Spanish language to their advantage.

But this was more a defensive tactic, a weapon of the weak, than a rational plan for the long term. In the end it was mostly non-Indians, and especially the bilingual and literate non-Indians, who benefited from Nahua monolingualism. That this was a problem had already become apparent to a few Indians in the Sierra during the Porfiriato. Juan Francisco Lucas' unwavering commitment to schooling and the relatively high literacy rates of Xochiapulco, attest to Nahua appreciation of the advantages of a Spanish education. However, beyond Xochiapulco, the need for schools was less obvious. Examples of commitment to education are few and far between but existent nonetheless. One of them comes from the barrio of Las Lomas (Zacapoxtla), the conservative hamlet which had seceded from liberal Xochiapulco. Unusual at the time, except for the case of Xochiapulco, the teacher at Las Lomas in 1897 was an indigenous man who lamented Indian ignorance. He decried the population's inability to defend their rights because of their monolingualism and illiteracy. If only they knew how useful an education was, they would be willing to cooperate by paying their taxes and sending their children to school.<sup>41</sup> But it would take many more teachers like that of Las Lomas and more efficient education than the Porfiriato's to persuade reluctant Indian notables and elders, and the population at large, that schools might benefit their communities. The view of the schoolmaster in

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<sup>41</sup> AMZx, box 46, 'Exp. no. 18. Volumen que contiene las colecciones de planas escritas por los alumnos de las escuelas de esta municipalidad y las alocuciones históricas del periodo de enseñanza, leídas por los respectivos preceptores de los barrios de esta cabecera', Las Lomas, Dec 1879.

Las Lomas anticipated post-revolutionary leaders' and teachers' preference for increased intervention to expand schooling.<sup>42</sup>

In contrast to the Nahua regional leaders, the peculiar municipality of Xochiapulco, and the teacher of Las Lomas, we find that the vast majority of the Indian population saw the school, and perhaps Spanish literacy itself, more as a space of mestizo domination than as a tool which could be appropriated to pursue Indian interests. The available evidence suggest that the Indian majority was right. Yet it was the optimism of men like Lucas with his unswerving support of education who could help bring change. Whether his optimism spread, and whether education improved, are questions to be explored in the following chapters.

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<sup>42</sup> On the growing awareness of the advantages of Spanish language proficiency and literacy, and the efforts of indigenous 'intellectuals' to persuade their communities of such benefits, once spaces had been opened beyond racist, acculturation models of education in the latter part of the twentieth century, see Guillermo de la Peña, 'New Brokers, New Ethnicities: Indigenous Intellectuals, NGOs and the Neoliberal State in Mexico' (Unpublished paper presented at the *Conference on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Manchester Anthropology*, Manchester Oct 1999) Available online <<http://les1.man.ac.uk/sa/Man99PolAnthPapers/Guillermo%20de%20la%20Pena.htm>. (22 Aug 2004). For a Michoacán community's decision to master Spanish and abandon Náhuatl in the 1950s see John Gledhill, *Cultura y desafío en Ostula: practicando la autonomía indígena en la costa-sierra nahua de Michoacán* (Zamora: El Colegio de Michoacán, 2004), p. 10. For a succinct, English version of some of the arguments in that book see the same author's 'Indigenous Autonomy as a Strategy for Social Inclusion: Some Paradoxes of Social Policy in Contemporary Mexico' (Unpublished paper presented at the *ESRC Social Policy Seminar*, ILAS, London, 27 Feb 2004).



**PART TWO**  
**THE REVOLUTION**

## **Chapter Four**

### **The Old And The New Orders**

This chapter outlines the political background to the experience of the Revolution in Cuetzalan and Huehuetla, starting from the local point of view and moving to the state and federal levels. The first part, 'Playing the Tune of Citizenship', studies the order achieved in the Sierra during the Porfiriato through an examination of its flourishing village bands. It argues that through their integration with cargo systems and the peasant family economy, as well as their participation in the communities' ritual, the bands were much more effective forms of socialisation than the schools.

The second part, 'The Demise of Municipal Autonomy', considers the political changes undergone by local communities from the Porfiriato to the Revolution, focusing on the erosion of local autonomy. Moving from the local to the state and federal levels, this section examines the impact of the 1910s revolutionary violence and the 1920s federal and state policies on the Sierra municipalities, especially the destruction of the tax system that fed local treasuries and sustained schools.

## I. Playing the Tune of Citizenship

This section looks at the village brass bands (*cuerpos filarmónicos*), which provided a form of integration into the community for young and adult men. The role of bands, educational institutions in their own right, is compared to the role of schools in pueblo life. The contract which men and boys (as young as ten) signed to become members of the village band started with training and provided a series of rights, such as exemption from taxes and office (enjoyed by either the band members or their fathers when the players were too young), in exchange for unpaid service as musicians. In this manner, participation in the band was connected to the cargo system and reflected an ideal of active citizenship. The bands played a crucial role in patriotic celebrations, a vital ritual of the liberal state, and additionally provided lay entertainment in Sunday serenades that emulated urban, middle-class leisure. Yet, at the same time, bands participated in religious festivals where they shared a space with pre-Hispanic and colonial music as well as a syncretic culture with a much longer history than that of the liberal state.

In some respects, the bands preserved a traditional order, reproducing compulsory forms of participation, rather than anticipating a modern, voluntary form of association. The bands' strict regulations and their integration with the cargo system meant that once a person joined up service was compulsory. If musicians tried to leave before the end of their contract, they could be coerced by the authorities to remain. At the same time, bands were popular because of their political role and their participation in ceremonial life and entertainment, and were

much more effective than schools as a form of socialisation for young men, integrating them into the community and introducing to them urban ideals of civilisation. Building upon a complex organisation of local government, including the articulation between municipal office and cargo systems, together with the population's pecuniary contributions, the work of the brass bands was interrupted by the breakdown of political order from 1911 onwards.

### Village Bands and Musical Education From the Porfiriato to the Revolution

Armed with saxophones, trombones, tubas, clarinets and cornets, and under the somewhat pompous name of *cuerpos filarmónicos* (philharmonic corps), the brass bands of Cuetzalan, San Miguel Tzinacapan, Huehuetla and Caxhuacan actively participated in the rich ceremonial life of the Sierra throughout the Porfiriato. Celebrations included the patron saints' festivals and other religious festivals as well as the patriotic holidays, of which the most important were the victory against European armies in the Battle of Puebla on 5 May 1862 and the Independence celebrations on 15-16 September. Other ceremonies included the inauguration of public works and the award of school prizes, which were generally made to coincide with a patriotic festival such as the promulgation of the 1857 Constitution on 5 February.<sup>1</sup>

By the turn of the century, the band in San Miguel Tzinacapan (Cuetzalan) was clearly a source of pueblo pride in its relations to other pueblos and, more

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<sup>1</sup> In Tetela the school prize-giving ceremony took place as part of the 5 May festivities, see Guy Thomson, 'Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism', pp. 61-62. For Tzinacapan see ASMTz, box 27, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 49. La superioridad ordena que los preceptores de las escuelas y niños que

importantly, vis-à-vis the headtown. Tzinacapan's musicians were of sufficient quality to be requested to attend the 5 May celebrations in the district seat of Zacapoaxtla and to provide music for religious services in neighbouring villages. The music director of Cuetzalan occasionally had to borrow instruments from Tzinacapan. With a band of 40 musicians, the Nahua pueblo could compete with the *cabecera*.<sup>2</sup>

During the 1900s the bands of Tzinacapan and San Andrés Tzicuilan alternated to provide weekly serenades every Thursday at the new bandstand in the recently renovated park of Cuetzalan. What the respectable Creole and mestizo ladies of the *Villa* thought of the mostly Nahua musicians who played waltzes, mazurkas, polkas, *schottisch* and *paso dobles* for their diversion, we do not know.<sup>3</sup> Still, the height of public entertainment was the weekend serenades provided by the philharmonic corps of the headtown.<sup>4</sup>

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asisten a ella estén en la ciudad de Zacapoaxtla para el día 3 de mayo a recibir los premios que hayan obtenido', Francisco Agustín Dieguillo to Tzinacapan, Cuetzalan 28 April 1882.

<sup>2</sup> ASMTz, box 66, Presidencia, Libro de actas y Acuerdos de la Junta Auxiliar de San Miguel Tzinacapan para el año de 1901 (LAA 1901), entries for 15 April and 19 Nov 1901; box 68, Presidencia, LAA 1902, entries for 15 Feb and 12 April 1902. AMC, box 85, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 22 Varios Asuntos', Tzinacapan to Cuetzalan, 8 Jan 1904; box 92, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 84 Relativo a festividades nacionales' Cuetzalan to Tzinacapan 16 April 1905; box 104, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 94 Festividades nacionales', Programa a que ha de sujetarse la próxima festividad nacional del 5 de mayo, Cuetzalan 27 April 1907; Letter from Cuetzalan to Tzinacapan 20 Aug 1907 and Programa para solemnizar en esta Villa el Aniversario de la proclamación de la Independencia Nacional, Cuetzalan 12 Sep 1907; box 124, Presidencia, 'Programa para solemnizar el primer centenario de la Independencia Nacional los días del 14 al 20 del presente mes', Cuetzalan 3 Sep 1910.

<sup>3</sup> ASMTz, box 66, Presidencia, Hernández to Miguel Juárez, Cuetzalan 30 March 1901 and box 68, Presidencia, Acta de sesión, Tzinacapan 7 July 1902. AMC, box 98, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 134. Informe de las mejoras y adelantos realizados en el municipio durante el año 1905 y el presente', Cuetzalan 14 Aug 1906.

<sup>4</sup> AMC, Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el año de 1910, entry for 21 May 1910.

That the bands were not merely a form of urban *décor* to emulate capital cities is revealed by the political role they played in the community, the strict regulations for the band members, and the relatively large expenses that the band entailed. Membership in the *cuerpo filarmónico* started with a period of training after which the music students, who could be as young as ten years old, began to participate in public events. The disputes between the authorities, on one hand, and band members and their parents, on the other, suggest that regulations were effectively enforced. In fact, as will be seen below, the bands were much more effective forms of discipline, socialisation and integration into the community for young people than the school.

### The Political Use of Bands

As Guy Thomson has noted, during the mid-nineteenth century village bands helped mestizo and Indian liberals in the Puebla Sierra develop patronage networks to replace old loyalties to long-established non-Indian elite groups and to the Church.<sup>5</sup> Once the Montaña party ruled in Puebla after 1877, the political role of the band could become more fractured. Independent of their allegiance to the Montaña, factions within towns and villages used the formation of a band as a focus of opposition to the local authorities. Such were the cases of Tzinacapan and Huehuetla.

As seen in Chapter Two, a faction of Nahua men opposing the Indian authorities and non-Indian secretary in 1875 Tzinacapan had proposed the formation of a village band. The authorities and the majority of the population,

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<sup>5</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism', pp. 31-68.

however, were reluctant to embark on a project that would require considerable resources. The faction that opposed the authorities did not manage to gather enough support and the band was not formed. Eventually, the authorities themselves decided to form a philharmonic corps in the early 1880s. Evidence suggests that by the beginning of the 1890s its activity had declined, possibly due to the deterioration of the instruments. However, in 1894 the auxiliary president, Juan Antonio, encouraged the population to contribute 6 cents every month to purchase new instruments and pay a director's salary of \$20 per month. From then the band served more as a source of general pueblo cohesion and pride than the instrument of a particular faction.<sup>6</sup>

In Huehuetla, as in Cuetzalan, the philharmonic corps participated in both religious and civic ceremonies.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, municipal presidents and non-Indian notables, such as Rosauero Castro and Federico González, used the band to serenade *jefes políticos*, precisely at a time when they needed to have their abusive implementation of *desamortización* approved by the district authority. In 1900 they invited the *jefe político*, Vicente Popoca, to the inauguration of the road communicating Huehuetla with the neighbouring municipality of Coyutla. They chose 2 April, the commemoration of the definitive triumph over the European intervention in 1867, to celebrate the road's inauguration. The Huehuetla

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<sup>6</sup> ASMTz, box 50, Presidencia, Acta de la sesión extraordinaria, Tzinacapan 13 March 1894.

<sup>7</sup> AMH, box 2, 'Borrador de oficios de este juzgado para varias autoridades, comenzado hoy 16 septiembre de 1874 y concluirá el 15 de septiembre de 1875. Municipio de Olinthla, Juzgado de Huehuetla', entry for 24 Dec 1874; box 5, Tesorería, Exp. no. 2. Expediente que contiene 18 comprobantes de data correspondientes al cuerpo filarmónico', Huehuetla 31 Dec 1885, Puebla 15 Jan 1885 and Huehuetla 3 Oct 1888; box 11, Libro de actas y acuerdos para el año de 1889, entries for 11 May and 14 Sep 1889; box 42, Fomento, 'Exp. no. 1. Cuerpo Filarmónico. Cantidades para su sostenimiento', Huehuetla Jan and Feb 1910 and Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 46. Circular pidiendo

philharmonic corps, entirely composed of Totonac men, played its best pieces for the *jefe político*. At the initiative of Vicente Popoca, the new road was named '*Paso 2 de Abril de Porfirio Díaz*' thus underlining the municipality's and the district's support for the president of the Republic, honouring his patriotic credentials at a time when he had already departed from many of his early political ideals.<sup>8</sup> A few months later, Popoca approved the land adjudications in favour of Federico González.<sup>9</sup> As will be seen in Chapter Six, years later, in 1911, the Huehuetla council, which at the time was hostile to González, decided to stop the philharmonic corps due to lack of funds. González and a group of discontents, used their support of the band as a focus of opposition to the local authorities.

### Hybrid Forms Of Citizenship: Band Membership And Cargo Systems

Membership of the *cuerpo filarmónico* was explicitly articulated within the cargo system. Band members were exempted from serving in the National Guard (until they were disbanded), from paying taxes and from taking civil or religious office (cargos). The importance of serving as a band member, which was considered a public service, is brought to light by the fact that the Cuetzalan 1883 regulations, passed under the municipal presidency of Francisco Agustín Dieguillo, contemplated the provision of modest social support. The 1883 regulations, in contrast to those of 1878, no longer required that members have a guarantor to pay

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informe acerca de los adelantos y mejoras realizadas durante los años 1909 y el actual', Huehuetla 24 Dec 1910'

<sup>8</sup> AMH, box 21, Presidencia, Fomento, 'Acta levantada con motivo de la inauguración del camino Paso 2 de Abril de Porfirio Díaz', Huehuetla 2 April 1900.

<sup>9</sup> AMH, box 21, Presidencia, Vicente Popoca to Presidente de Huehuetla, Zacatlán 30 June 1900.



compensation if the musician left before the end of his contract, suggesting that he favoured opening the opportunity to join the band to those of modest means.<sup>10</sup>

Once a prospective musician signed a contract with the band, membership became compulsory. Musicians in service had a contractual obligation to remain in the corps for a minimum period of five years. When the first period was completed, musicians were free to leave or continue for a second five-year period. Only serious illness or a certified change of residence were legitimate reasons for a musician to leave the corps before completion of the contract. Some regulations additionally allowed that a member could leave the corps if he found a replacement to play the same instrument or if he paid \$40 to cover the expenses incurred on his education. Members who were expelled for indiscipline also had to compensate the municipal coffers for the investment made in their training. When band members wanted to leave service before the end of their period and did not fulfil any of the conditions above, they adopted the same strategies to be followed when seeking exception from office in the cargo system. They often faced a stark choice between being jailed or fleeing town, or, if they had a good case to make, they petitioned the *jefatura política*.<sup>11</sup>

The expenses incurred made authorities all the more concerned with having a respectable band. As seen above, in Tzinacapan the auxiliary president arranged for a special fee to be collected every month. In Cuetzalan, instead of organising a separate contribution, the fee for the Chicontepepec tax was increased

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<sup>10</sup> This comprised medicine for members who fell ill, as well as a contribution to the funeral services of members who died during their contract. AMC, box 8, Presidencia, 'Reglamento para el gobierno económico del cuerpo filarmónico de la Villa de Cuetzalan. Año de 1878' Cuetzalan, 16 Feb 1878 and box 17, 'Exp. no. 86. Contiene el reglamento del Cuerpo Filarmónico de esta Villa', Cuetzalan 1883.

<sup>11</sup> See cases below as well as Guy Thomson, 'Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism', pp. 58-60.

in order to raise enough funds to pay the bandmaster's salary. Additionally, authorities often encouraged donations from wealthy *vecinos* as well as public employees. In Huehuetla the band was funded by both special contributions and the public instruction fund.<sup>12</sup> To the price of the instruments and their maintenance, as well as the director's salary, the pueblo had to add the loss of 40 men who did not make pecuniary contributions to the local treasury or serve in cargos.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, municipal and auxiliary presidents, together with public instruction aldermen and the philharmonic corps inspector (*vigilante*), made sure that members attended classes and rehearsals. The Cuetzalan regulations had detailed sanctions for undisciplined musicians ranging from reprimands, through fines and confinement in the rehearsal room, to expulsion. Disciplinary measures were strictly enforced; authorities sometimes went as far as imprisoning disobedient band members, a punishment which was not contemplated in the contract, but corresponded to the local customary and compulsory forms of government.<sup>14</sup> This contrasts markedly with the situation in elementary schools. Although authorities were aware of regulations and sanctions with regard to compulsory education, as has been seen in the previous chapters, they were applied much more selectively and were honoured more in the breach.

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<sup>12</sup> AMC, box 21, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 185. Consulta que se hace para el pago del director del cuerpo filarmónico de esta Villa', Cuetzalan 29 Dec 1885. AMH, box 10, Tesorería, 'Noticia pormenorizada de los ingresos y egresos habidos en esta oficina desde el 1 de enero a 31 de diciembre del presente año', Huehuetla 31 Dec 1882.

<sup>13</sup> There were only 25 musicians in the 1870s but the number rose to 40 in the 1880s.

<sup>14</sup> For cases of imprisonment of disobedient bandsmen see AMH, box 18, Presidencia, 'Exp. que contiene la correspondencia oficial del mes de diciembre de 1898', Federico González to Presidente de Caxhuacan, Huehuetla 20 Dec 1898 and Guy Thomson, 'Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism', pp. 58-59.

The band's obligatory performances under the Cuetzalan 1883 regulations comprised all civil ceremonies, namely, patriotic festivals, Sunday serenades and whatever performances authorities requested for special occasions. However, the contract which the Cuetzalan corps director signed in 1875 had specified his obligation to accompany the corps not only in civic festivals but additionally in the patron saint's celebrations (*funciones titulares*) for each of the municipality's four pueblos as well as the *cabecera*. Authorities probably saw this practice as a useful way of strengthening ties between pueblos and headtowns, and between authorities and the population.<sup>15</sup> The exclusion of religious festivities from the 1883 regulations was most likely a result of the local authorities' desire to comply with Reform Laws, at least in print. But participation of the band in religious celebrations continued and was key to the *cuero filarmónico's* role in the community. In fact, the regulations for Tzinacapan in 1895 were more ambitious than those of 1875 in Cuetzalan, specifying that musicians were obliged to play in all '*cofradía*' and 'public' performances. *Cofradía* performances would include not only the patrons saints' celebrations but those of several other saints, and could therefore result in a tight calendar of commitments for the village band. Performances for private celebrations were voluntary, except for those which the Tzinacapan band was expected to provide free of charge to auxiliary president Juan Antonio, on account of his status as founder of the band.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> AMC, box 5, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 21. Contiene las condiciones estipuladas entre la comisión nombrada y el C. Vicente Cuevas Romero para la dirección del Cuerpo Filarmónico', Cuetzalan 31 Aug 1875.

<sup>16</sup> AMC, box 17, 'Exp. no. 86. Contiene el reglamento del Cuerpo Filarmónico de esta Villa', Cuetzalan 1883. ASMTz, box 50, Presidencia, 'Reglamento bajo el cual queda sujeto el cuerpo filarmónico de este pueblo', Tzinacapan 1895; box 68, Presidencia, Amado Mora a Presidente Tzinacapan, Cuetzalan 3 July 1902

## Young Musicians

How was it possible for bands to fulfil (for those who joined) the functions of socialisation more effectively than schools did for students? And who were the members of the philharmonic corps? Evidence for Cuetzalan, San Miguel Tzinacapan, San Andrés Tzicuilan and the neighbouring municipality of Nauzontla (Zacapoaxtla district), as well as Huehuetla, suggests that band members were both Indian and non-Indian and most were fairly young. They were likely to be recruited among the small number of children who attended school.<sup>17</sup> Although most bandsmen in Tzinacapan were Nahuas, occasionally non-Indians joined the band. For instance, in 1901, when the band needed to replace 24 musicians who had completed their period, the three sons of long-time teacher and secretary of Tzinacapan, Agustín Becerra, joined up. Similarly in Huehuetla, most members were Indian while in Cuetzalan there was probably a greater non-Indian presence.<sup>18</sup>

In Nauzontla, the band funded by voluntary contributions from the population, and inaugurated on the occasion of the Battle of Puebla *fiesta* of 5

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<sup>17</sup> For young musicians in Huehuetla see AMH, box 51, Presidencia, Comparecencia de Pedro Juárez ante Manuel H Cortés, Huehuetla 22 Aug 1913. For more cases of young musicians in the Puebla Sierra and elsewhere see Guy Thomson, 'Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism', pp. 54-55, n. 81 and Guy Thomson, 'The Ceremonial and Political Roles of Village Bands, 1846-1974' in William H Boczkcy, Cheryl E. Martin and William E. French (eds.), *Rituals of rule, rituals of resistance. Public celebrations and popular culture in Mexico* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1994), p. 320.

<sup>18</sup> ASMTz, box 66, Presidencia, Acta de la sesión de la Junta Auxiliar, Tzinacapan 5 March 1901. AMH, box 3, Tesorería, 'Exp. no. 3 Expediente que contiene 16 comprobantes de data correspondientes al Cuerpo Filarmónico y cortes de caja del año actual. Año de 1886', Huehuetla Dec 1886.

May 1909, was composed of 34 boys aged 10 to 14.<sup>19</sup> In 1910 in Tzinacapan, the local authorities ordered that the best 25 pupils from the boys' school abandon their primary education to join the music band. State school inspector Francisco C. Cortés regretted that the best students would leave to the detriment of the school and their own education, and he proposed a hectic schedule to make music training and elementary schooling compatible. Music lessons should take place between 6 and 8 in the morning, primary school from 8 to 15 hours, with a brief midday break, and music lessons would continue again from 15 to 18 hours. There is no sign, however, that Cortés' ambitious proposal was implemented.<sup>20</sup> In fact, evidence for both Tzinacapan and neighbouring Tzicuilan suggests that children who joined the band simply stopped attending school.<sup>21</sup>

The young members of the band were relieved from service as *topiles* (the lowest cargo, which was occupied by the youngest, and typically included running errands and cleaning).<sup>22</sup> Additionally, parents were exempted from cargos during their children's service in the band. Band membership was not only one of the paths to participate in the duties of citizenship in the Sierra, but was also integrated into the peasant family economy. In spite of the exemption from taxes

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<sup>19</sup> AMZx, box 30-E, Presidencia, Fomento. 'Exp. no. 36. Relativo a la inauguración del cuerpo filarmónico municipal "Ramón Corral" de Nauzonfla', Zacapoaxtla 10 May 1909.

<sup>20</sup> AMC, box 63, 'Acta de visita a la escuela Rayón de Tzicuilan', Tzicuilan 5 Aug 1898; box 123, Instrucción Pública. 'Exp. no. 68 Relativo a las vistas de inspección practicadas a las escuelas por el inspector Francisco C. Cortés 19 Feb 1910', Acta de Visita del Inspector, Tzinacapan 25 April 1910, Zacapoaxtla to Cuetzalan 6 May 1910.

<sup>21</sup> For further evidence of the youth of band members in Cuetzalan see regulations to protect their 'moral' education, which was believed to be at risk by their participation in private dances where alcoholic drinks were served. AMC, box 17, 'Exp. no. 86. Contiene el reglamento del Cuerpo Filarmónico de esta Villa', Cuetzalan 1883.

and other offices in the cargo system, service in the band, as in other offices, required family support. It could also become burdensome, as the cases presented below demonstrate. Even if musicians often obtained permission to work on their corn plots, they often had to rely on their fathers' support while they served in the band, and some had to leave the music service altogether when their family commitments increased, as with the birth of children and the setting up of a separate household.<sup>23</sup>

A case from Tzinacapan shows how band membership was integrated into the cargo system and the extended family. One of the boys who joined the renewed philharmonic corps of Tzinacapan in 1894 was Antonio Pablo, son of Miguel Francisco. Miguel Francisco obtained exception from cargos and taxes after enlisting his son in the philharmonic corps. Miguel Francisco's account of how his son joined the band by the invitation and persuasion of the auxiliary president and founder of the band, Juan Antonio, corresponds to the procedures for appointments in a cargo system. It was, in fact, identical to the case of the appointment of *tenientes* in charge of organising the dances for religious festivities. *Tenientes*, like band members, were young men (but older than *topiles*) and the invitation was extended to their parents. Both the parent and the young man were responsible to the community.<sup>24</sup> During his term as auxiliary president Juan Antonio respected the exemptions that favoured Miguel Francisco, but in subsequent years the latter served as tax collector and alderman and took the

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<sup>22</sup> On child *topiles* see Introduction to Part One. For young musicians' exception from service as *topiles* and their missing school in Mitla (Oaxaca), see Guy Thomson, 'The Ceremonial and Political Roles', pp. 326-327.

<sup>23</sup> ASMTz, box 68, Presidencia, Licencia que se dio a los filarmónicos para atender la siembra de maíz por una semana, Tzinacapan 13 Feb 1902.

<sup>24</sup> TTOSA, *Tejuan*, p. 246.

religious office of *mayor*. In 1906, Antonio Pablo was still a member of the band and his father Miguel Francisco petitioned to be exempted from a new office. Given that Antonio Pablo had already set up his own household, Miguel Francisco's petition to be exempted from cargos on the basis of his son's membership of the band would normally have been unheard. However, Miguel Francisco claimed he lived in poverty, his wife was ill and he was giving economic support to his musician son, even though he had set up a separate household three years before. The authorities decided to exempt Miguel Francisco from office.<sup>25</sup>

As the young music students grew up, membership would become more burdensome. Martín Rivera joined the music band in 1895 to play the clarinet and completed his contract in 1900 but he continued playing in the band. In 1903, however, he wished to leave the service because he had greater family commitments. Although the authorities in Cuetzalan believed that Rivera had not completed as many years as he claimed and accused him of excessive absenteeism, the case made by Rivera was compelling. When reporting to Zacapoaxtla, Cuetzalan did not deny that membership of the corps could be burdensome or that Rivera had a family to sustain, they simply alleged that if they allowed Rivera to withdraw, it would set a bad precedent and further petitions to abandon the corps would follow.<sup>26</sup>

The compulsory character of band membership was made clear in the sanctions specifying that musicians who left town without notice would be

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<sup>25</sup> AMC, box 96, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 7 Varios Asuntos 1 Jan 1906', Miguel Francisco to Presidente de Cuetzalan, Tzinacapan 12 Jan 1906.

<sup>26</sup> AMC, box 81, Presidencia, 'Exp. no 86. Relativo a que Martin Rivera pide su baja como músico de Tzicuilan', 31 Aug 1903.

summoned to return. In fact, local authorities called for authorities in the neighbouring municipalities to summon or arrest the fugitive musicians, following the same procedure as when men fled the village to avoid paying taxes or schooling their children.<sup>27</sup>

Although the above cases underline the costs of band membership, they also show how it was embedded in family and pueblo life. Service in the philharmonic corps would not be more burdensome than the religious and political offices which all males in the community were expected to take. By contrast, school attendance was a practice separate from village organisation which, by taking children's time from other duties, interfered with, rather than contributed to, the cargo system. It is therefore no surprise that some preferred or agreed to their children leaving school and joining the music band. But what did band members learn?

### Musical Literacy

Music teachers came from different municipalities in the Sierra including Nauzontla and Tetela, which enjoyed good reputations, and villages vied with each other to attract the best music director.<sup>28</sup> Hence his salary was often above that of the schoolteacher.<sup>29</sup> A year before the philharmonic corps' contract

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<sup>27</sup> ASMTz, box 62, Presidencia, Miguel Juárez to Presidente Auxiliar de Rcycs, Tzinacapan, 9 July 1900.

<sup>28</sup> ASMTz, box 62, Presidencia, LSA 1899, cntry for 24 Feb and 21 April 1900; Tzinacapan to jefe político Carlos Macip, Tzinacapan 5 June 1900; Note from Silveriano Mora to Ignacio Orduña, Tzinacapan 24 March 1900. TTOSA-CEPEC *Tejuan*, pp. 219-220.

<sup>29</sup> In 1917 Huehuetla, for instance, it was twice as much as the highest teaching salary in the headtown See Chapter Six, Section II.



finished, the director would train sufficient students to replace the musicians who were to leave the band.<sup>30</sup> In principle, teaching for the young members of the philharmonic corps included musical notation, the singing of scales and voice practice. The most advanced students would be selected to learn to orchestrate. One year was spent in preparatory studies before they formally joined the corps and the five-year contract commenced.<sup>31</sup> However, the extent of band members' musical knowledge varied. Evidence suggests that directors were frequently content with having their students play an instrument regardless of whether they had learned to read music scores. Even in the cases when they were praised for their music, we cannot assume they had learned musical notation.

At least two directors in Tzinacapan made an effort to teach musical notation during the Porfiriato. Miguel Manzano, who was the first Nahua teacher in Tzinacapan (all previous schoolmasters and music instructors had been non-Indian), initially taught his students to play by ear, but later, thanks to his knowledge of Spanish, he had the opportunity to study music and instructed the Tzinacapan band to read scores. Another young musician (and probably a non-Indian), named Eulogio Pineda, taught in Tzinacapan during the Porfiriato. When he arrived in the pueblo, he found a band that could play all the music listed in their repertory while none of the members could read scores. After listening to the band, Pineda made them hang up their instruments and sit down to learn the scales and the value of each note. After improvements, the Tzinacapan band was invited

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<sup>30</sup> AMC, Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el año de 1910, entry for 25 June 1910.

<sup>31</sup> AMC, box 8, Presidencia, 'Reglamento para el gobierno económico del cuerpo filarmónico de la Villa de Cuetzlan. Año de 1878' Cuetzalan, 16 Feb 1878; box 17, 'Exp. no. 86. Contiene el reglamento del Cuerpo Filarmónico de esta Villa', Cuetzalan 1883.

to play in Zacapoaxtla's bandstand rather than be relegated to a street corner of the district capital as it was before the learning of musical notation.<sup>32</sup>

Still, we cannot assume that the village bands progressed steadily from a rudimentary musical knowledge and playing by ear, to a command of the instruments through timing and musical notation. They were dependent on the availability of funding and bandmasters. The bands suffered interruptions when authorities could not raise enough money for their maintenance. As in schools, when directors changed, students could either lose or improve its skills. As late as 1913, after decades sustaining a philharmonic corps, the Cuetzalan band inspector resigned because he found that teaching was deficient and he considered the band a waste of resources. In fact, the forty musicians who comprised the philharmonic corps attended their classes and rehearsals punctually and their music satisfied the authorities and public. However, José María Hernández, the music inspector, was outraged that most students in the corps did not understand the timing of the different musical notes and actually played by ear.<sup>33</sup> Hernández might have been even more indignant had he learned that many band members in the Sierra could not read Spanish.<sup>34</sup>

### Who Calls The Tune?

Guy Thomson has argued that the philharmonic corps, which were linked to the National Guards, were key in developing military, patriotic ritual and liberal

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<sup>32</sup> TTOSA, *Tejuan*, pp. 217-224, 251-253.

<sup>33</sup> AMC, *Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el año de 1913*, entries for 24 March and 26 June 1913. TTOSA, *Tejuan*, pp. 217-224, 251-253.

<sup>34</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism', p. 57. Keith Brewster, p. 59.

networks during 1848-1888 in the district of Tetela, while in Zacapoaxtla the music bands were closer to conservative families, religious ritual and the Church.<sup>35</sup> By contrast, in Zinacantán and Chamula, in the state of Chiapas, Tzotziles preferred pre-Hispanic and colonial instruments which produced sacred music and accompanied song, such as pipes, drums and strings, while brass bands were seen as mere background noise produced by the non-Indians from neighbouring towns.<sup>36</sup>

Evidence for the Porfiriato in Cuetzalan indicates that philharmonic corps were less of a symbol of martial patriotic liberalism than they were in Tetela, and more of a hybrid space that allowed for the expression of both popular patriotism and folk religion, whether it was the mestizo religion guided by the parish priest in the headtown of Cuetzalan, or the syncretic and often anticlerical religion of the Nahua pueblos.<sup>37</sup> In Tzinacapan the older musical instruments connected with pre-Hispanic and colonial music such as rattles, pipes, drums, violins and guitars were played to accompany the most popular dances such as the *Voladores*, *Santiagos*, *Moros y Cristianos*, *Negritos* and *Tocotines*. Yet, in this pueblo, although only a handful of men had ever joined the National Guard, the brass bands were welcome and participated in the religious, as well as the civil, celebrations.<sup>38</sup> The bands in Cuetzalan and San Miguel Tzinacapan were fully integrated into ceremonial life

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<sup>35</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism'.

<sup>36</sup> On the preference for more 'traditional' instruments in Oaxaca and especially Chiapas see Guy Thomson, 'The Ceremonial and Political Roles', pp. 322-324.

<sup>37</sup> The inventories of Cuetzalan and Tzinacapan's bands list military patriotic music as well as religious and civil. AMC, box 19, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 72. Contiene el inventario de los instrumentos de música del cuerpo filarmónico de esta Villa', Cuetzalan year 1884. ASMT7, box 57, Presidencia, 'Inventario de los útiles y piezas que posee el cuerpo filarmónico de este pueblo', Tzinacapan 1 Jan 1898. Guy Thomson, 'The Ceremonial and Political Roles', pp. 316-321.

and public entertainment. The musicians' work was taken seriously and when the band was good it provided collective pride and enjoyment as well as serving political functions.<sup>39</sup> Evidence for Huehuetla indicates that the philharmonic corps participated in civic and religious festivities but it is unclear whether it boasted cohesion and pride to the extent that the band did in Tzinacapan. It is nonetheless evident that the Huehuetla band fulfilled important political roles when used by specific factions to demonstrate loyalty to higher authorities or to oppose rival groups in local politics.

Both bands and elementary schools needed the populations' pecuniary contributions and authorities successfully tapped villages' organisational resources to collect funds. Although similarly funded, bands and schools had very different roles and results.

Through music and the accompaniment of festivals, the philharmonic corps were potentially open to European, mestizo, Indian, religious and civil influences, while the school was inevitably a space of one-way acculturation favouring Spanish speakers. Additionally, band members were committed to a five-year contract whereas students generally attended school for only one year. The results obtained through a musical education, compared with the meagre results of the village schools, were relatively rapid and much more tangible (as well as audible). As we have seen in previous chapters, schoolchildren barely learned to pronounce Spanish words from texts whose meaning they often did not understand. By contrast, by playing music, members of the philharmonic corps could fully contribute to civic and religious ritual life, as well as entertainment.

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<sup>38</sup> ASMTz, box 14, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 40. Referente a los padrones de exceptuados y rebajados'. Tzinacapan 1873.

<sup>39</sup> TTOSA, *Tejuan*, p. 218. Alain Ichon, *La religión de los totonacas*, pp. 377-430.

Additionally, music learning possibly provided a somewhat less disadvantageous space for Indians. In the schoolroom non-Indian students could easily excel while Nahuas and Totonacs had a clear language disadvantage. With the musical instrument, Indian and non-Indian pupils started on a more equal footing. Although the bandmaster was generally a Spanish speaker, a fact which must have favoured mestizo children, when students had to learn music, and sometimes simply to play by ear, command of the Spanish language mattered less. Some Nahuas and Totonacs might have excelled in music even if they found the Spanish language or primary school instruction difficult to tackle.

Bands throughout the Porfiriato thus provided a space of sociability for Indians and mestizos, town dwellers and pueblo residents. However, with the break up of rule brought about by the Revolution, populations became reluctant to make pecuniary contributions to public causes. Local treasuries further suffered when head taxes, including the Chicontepec, were abolished. As if this were not enough, instruments were lost to Villistas and Carrancistas in Tzinacapan and Huehuetla. Sustaining a philharmonic corps became a luxury few could afford. In Tzinacapan, when a band was needed, it had to be hired from Nauzontla or elsewhere. Huehuetla also took time to recover.<sup>40</sup>

Yet, once the worst of revolutionary violence and economic crisis had passed, the political and ceremonial roles of philharmonic corps could be resurrected, and the bands used as a focus for post-revolutionary reconstruction. Juan Francisco Lucas's successor, Gabriel Barrios, who became commander of the Federal 46<sup>th</sup> Battalion in the Sierra, was well aware of this and formed a philharmonic corps for his soldiers. In his study of Gabriel Barrios' cacicazgo,

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<sup>40</sup> For Tzinacapan see TTOSA, *Tejuán*, pp. 217-224. For Huehuetla see Chapter Six.

Keith Brewster has observed that the Nahua commander used the music band to both strengthen ties with indigenous communities and assure non-Indians that the soldiers he commanded were not dangerous Indians with guns, but disciplined members of serrano society.<sup>41</sup> If for the Indians a more democratic distribution of power often came with arms, for the Hispanic-mestizo elite families, the starched uniforms, bright brass and classical music, all trappings of civilisation, made Indian soldiers more acceptable. Judging by the mostly European repertoire of patriotic festivals, the Batallion's band did not yet exploit the potential of music to acculturate both ways. While Indians played European pieces, non-Indians in the district capitals were apparently not being treated yet to the traditional tunes of Nahua villages or to regional song.<sup>42</sup>

When Barrios' band serenaded Zacatlán with waltzes, many changes had taken and were still taking place for the Sierra municipalities and their schools. These are outlined in the next section.

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<sup>41</sup> Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, pp. 36-37, 42, 55-61, 67.

<sup>42</sup> Yet the bands might at least have adopted and adapted some of this music to include it in their repertory for Indian communities or private parties. For the European repertoire of Sierra Batallion's band see AMZ, Year 1920, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 27. Relativo a Festividades Cívicas', Programa para la conmemoración del CX aniversario de nuestra Independencia Nacional, Zacatlán 14 Sep 1920.

## **II. The Demise of Municipal Autonomy:**

### **From the Porfiriato to the Revolution**

This section argues that the most important change brought about by the Revolution in terms of the Sierra's local government and public education was the municipalities' loss of autonomy. It identifies two processes as the key to explain this result: a) the erosion of autonomy that began during the Porfiriato through the disbanding of the locally-controlled National Guards and through fiscal centralisation and b) the impoverishment of municipal treasuries and ensuing difficulties to sustain schools and village bands, which came as a result of taxpayers' resistance from the beginning of the armed revolution, and the abolition of head taxes, including the Chicontepec tax, in 1917.

Although the municipalities' loss of power gave an opportunity for the federal and state government to step in to provide the services which the local government could not, they were too weak to reach localities like Cuetzalan and Huehuetla. The state government was unable to uphold order and when it intervened in the municipalities it was only to disturb a fragile political balance. For its part, the federal government, despite its much trumpeted support for rural education, could only reach a small fraction of the thousands of pueblos in the country.

## The Old Order

The Revolution in Puebla started with a loose Maderista movement ranging from old supporters of the Porfirian regime turned moderate reformers, to a more popular and radical movement of the lower-middle class, artisans, and workers led by Puebla City cobbler Aquiles Serdán. Despite the vitality of the radical wing of the movement, the moderates got the upper hand, supported by Francisco I. Madero. *Licenciado* Rafael Cañete, a former supporter of the Porfirian regime already boasting newly acquired Maderista credentials, became the first governor of the new regime. From the time Cañete took power in 1911 until the governorship of Leonides Andrew Almazán starting in 1929, more than twenty governors occupied the Puebla executive. Even after the 'armed revolution' was officially over, and starting with Constitutionalist Alfonso Cabrera, there were in Puebla no less than a dozen governors in twelve years (1917-1929).<sup>43</sup>

With such an unstable government in Puebla, the Sierra Norte resorted to regional leaders. After the death in 1917 of the Nahua Montaña leader, known as the 'Patriarch of the Sierra', Juan Francisco Lucas, another shrewd soldier, skilful politician and acculturated bilingual Nahua, Gabriel Barrios, took over. But if Juan Francisco Lucas, at the height of his power and of the Sierra's autonomy, had been commander of the locally-controlled National Guard, Gabriel Barrios, in heading the Brigada Serrana, acted as representative of federal power. Barrios took over at a peculiar time for the Sierra. A great degree of autonomy had been lost to Porfirian military and political centralisation and this trend would prevail in the last instance. On the other hand, the armed revolution, the destruction of the



old regime and the chaos that followed through to the end of the 1920s, did provide opportunities for enhanced regional independence, which Barrios readily seized. His soldiers continued to be locally recruited and refused to serve away from the region.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, rather than imposing an autocratic rule in the region, for which he probably did not have the means, Barrios negotiated with communities and sought to obtain support from the dominant factions in the municipalities. But this was ultimately a fragile autonomy, based on violence and disorder, as well as an unstable government in Puebla, all of which would recede and give way to a new state in the 1930s, a state which, as will be shown below, was built upon an impoverished and weakened municipal government. Let us first outline the erosion of autonomy that took place during the Porfiriato.

Between 1854 and 1877, the military potential of the Sierra contributed to the liberal triumph at the national level, giving a great degree of power to the Montaña party and autonomy to the Sierra. This meant that Montaña leaders implemented liberalism pragmatically, negotiating its thorniest clauses with the population. However, in a context of Porfirian peace and progress, the military potential of the Sierra was of no interest to Mexico City. If anything, it was a threat. In the 1880s Porfirio Díaz disbanded the National Guards, which became mere auxiliary forces at the command of federal power, and organised a professional, national army.<sup>45</sup> As a result of this, the power of Lucas and other

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<sup>43</sup> David G. LaFrance, *The Mexican Revolution in Puebla, 1908-1913. The Maderista Movement and the Failure of Liberal Reform*. (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1989).

<sup>44</sup> When Barrios was transferred in 1930, having to leave the Sierra, many of his soldiers refused to follow him, and a new generation had to be recruited. Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, ch. 2, especially pp. 36-37, 42, 62-63.

<sup>45</sup> For the Sierra see Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, ch. 14. For a broader, general view of this process at the national level see Mauricio Merino, *Gobierno local, poder nacional. La*

*serrano* leaders, based to a great extent on the reliability and efficacy of its National Guard commanders and soldiers, was irremediably reduced and the Sierra as a region lost much of its autonomy.

The municipalities, for their part, had lost much of their wealth through the sale of communal lands under the *desamortización*. At the same time, they suffered a process of fiscal centralisation, further undermining local governments' autonomy.<sup>46</sup> A brief account of this process is necessary to understand the significance of the Chicontepepec tax and its prominent place in the Sierra's local budgets. *Jefes políticos* had lost the *rebajados* tax (later *contribución civil* or *contribución personal*) to the state government in 1870.<sup>47</sup> Of the revenue collected from this *contribución personal* or head tax, paid by all men aged 18 to 60, the municipalities kept only 20 per cent. In order to compensate for these losses, municipal governments throughout the country, and in the Sierra, resorted to a series of imposts such as fees for the use of market space, the rent of public buildings for private purposes, licenses for commercial houses (*patentes*), fees for slaughtering (*matanza de ganado*), property taxes (*predial*), fines, etc.<sup>48</sup>

Notably, municipalities doggedly persisted collecting the colonial commerce taxes or *alcabalas*, which stood against the liberal principle of free commerce. *Alcabalas* imposed a fee on the commodities introduced for sale in a

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*contienda por la formación del Estado mexicano* (Mexico: Colegio de México, 1998), pp. 85-89, 100-104, 131-133, 188, 251-253.

<sup>46</sup> Mauricio Merino, *Gobierno local, poder nacional*, ch. 3 and 4. Gloria Peralta, 'La Hacienda Publica' in Daniel Cosío Villegas, *Historia Moderna de México. El Porfiriato. La vida Económica*. (México: Hermes, 1965).

<sup>47</sup> On this tax see Chapter One.

<sup>48</sup> See, for instance, AMC, box 9, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 30. Acusación hecha al C. Receptor de Rentas por abusos cometidos en el pueblo de Tzinacapan', Cuetzalan 16 Feb 1879 and 'Exp. no. 104. Formación de Presupuestos', Cuetzalan 29 Nov 1879.

municipal market by residents from other municipalities, and, additionally, charged locals for every sale.<sup>49</sup> Despite their abolition in the 1857 Constitution, *alcabalas* continued in practice throughout the nineteenth century, sometimes overtly acknowledged by federal government, which under liberal arguments lamented its persistence, but, at the same time, pragmatically recognised that they did not yet have an adequate substitute for them and that the federal government benefited from their revenue (obtaining 25 per cent of its proceeds via the *contribución federal*).<sup>50</sup> Although a more serious attempt to abolish *alcabalas* came in 1896, the municipalities in the Sierra, and others in the country, continued charging them. By the early 1910s they had disappeared from the municipal budgets of Huehuetla and Cuetzalan, but returned in the early 1910s and the 1920s.<sup>51</sup>

In sum, the municipalities lost revenue as well as communal land. The persistence of *alcabalas* helped impoverished local treasuries but their revenue was necessarily limited in regions with modest economies. In this context, it was

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<sup>49</sup> See, for instance, AMH, box 10, Tesorería, Noticia pormenorizada de los ingresos y egresos habidos en esta oficina desde el 1 de enero al 31 de diciembre del presente año, Huehuetla 31 Dec 1882; box 14, Presidencia, Presupuesto de ingresos y gastos municipales que debe regir en el próximo año de 1888, Huehuetla 12 Nov 1887; 'Presupuesto de Ingresos que ha de regir durante el presente año fiscal en el Municipio de Huehuetla', *POEP*, Sección de Leyes, Puebla 22 Oct 1926.

<sup>50</sup> The *contribución federal* was created by Benito Juárez in 1861 and abolished in 1949 by the government of Miguel Alemán. Luis Aboites, *Excepciones y privilegios. Modernización tributaria y centralización en México, 1922-1972* (Mexico: Colegio de México, 2003), pp. 67, 261-266.

<sup>51</sup> Mauricio Merino sees 1896 as the definitive and effective abolition of *alcabalas*. But Gloria Peralta is more cautious, concluding abolition was only effective 'to some extent'. New research by Luis Aboites, and the experience of the Sierra, indicates they continued well after 1896. Mauricio Merino, *Gobierno local, poder nacional*, pp. 173-188. Gloria Peralta, 'La Hacienda Pública', pp. 904-913. For a general view of the persistence of this tax see Luis Aboites, 'Alcabalas Posporfirianas', pp. 363-393 and Luis Aboites, *Excepciones y privilegios*, pp. 75-77, 80. For the Sierra see footnotes above.

very important that the municipalities of the state of Puebla still kept the Chicontepec tax for schools. The typical municipal budget demonstrated the strength of Chicontepec. For instance, in 1911, Huehuetla had a total income of \$3,376 for general funds (*fondo del común*), of which just over a third (\$1,368) came from the *contribución personal*. By contrast, the Chicontepec Tax produced an annual income of \$2,880, which represented 86 per cent of the total public instruction funds (\$ 3,348).<sup>52</sup> However, with the disorder of the 1910s, resistance to taxes became widespread and was followed in 1917 by the abolition of head taxes (both the *contribución personal* and the Chicontepec tax). The problems provoked by the instability of the 1910s and the abolition of headtaxes in 1917, in terms of municipal revenue, are best appreciated in the unfolding of events at the local level, which will be described for Cuetzalan and Huehuetla in Chapters Five and Six. Suffice to say now that such abolition effectively ended any secure form of funding schools. Below I examine the changes in municipal government introduced by the 1917 Constitution and the revolutionaries' decision to abolish head taxes, as well as the response of the Puebla state government to these policies.

### Indians, Taxes And *Municipios*

Among revolutionary demands, local autonomy has often been seen as one of the most important, perhaps second only to the agrarian question.<sup>53</sup> But if local

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<sup>52</sup> AMH, box 43, Tesorería, 'Exp. no. 20. Referente a los presupuestos de los ramos que deben regir en el año próximo de 1911', Huehuetla 15 Oct 1910.

<sup>53</sup> Recently it has been argued that in the state of Puebla the issue of autonomy was at least as important as the agrarian question. David LaFrance, *Revolution in Mexico's Heartland. Politics,*

autonomy was to have any real meaning surely it was through the functions of local government. Yet none of the revolutionary factions penned any programmes to define the character and role of the new municipality, beyond vague, general statements of 'freedom', 'autonomy' or 'independence', and the need to abolish the district level of administration and its much maligned *jefe político*. The *Constitucionalistas* adopted the appealing but ultimately delusive term of *municipio libre*, which was enshrined in article 115 of the Constitution of 1917. This confirmed the abolition of districts and *jefes políticos* and provided for direct local elections, but the municipality's role would be reduced to that of provider of basic public services. State congresses were to decide how they would be funded and this meant fiscal centralisation in favour of the states and to the detriment of the *municipios*. Additionally, the recognition of the right to collective land property in article 27 of the Constitution was not given to the municipality but to a newly created institution which would become, wherever formed, an alternative local administration: the *ejido* committee. Thus, landed property which could have become a source of municipal strength and autonomy, as had been the case of the corporate pueblos before liberal legislation, was surgically separated from municipal government and, additionally, would enjoy fiscal exemption. The *ejido*'s independence of local government would be further enhanced by its direct connection with the state agrarian commission and the federal *Departamento Agrario*.<sup>54</sup> Ultimately, the rhetoric of '*municipio libre*' encapsulated in article 115 would not stop the weakening of the municipalities brought about by fiscal

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*War, and State Building in Puebla, 1913-1920* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2003), Introduction and Conclusions.

<sup>54</sup> Mauricio Merino, *Gobierno local, poder nacional*, ch. 5. Luis Aboites, *Excepciones y privilegios*, pp. 80-81 and 227-259.

centralisation and the social policies directed from the federal executive. In fact, the centralisation that started with the liberal governments of the second half of the nineteenth century accelerated after the revolution.<sup>55</sup> Let us now examine the abolition of head taxes.

Although the nineteenth-century head taxes bore a close resemblance to the discriminatory Indian tribute, they embodied crucial changes: they were applied universally, irrespective of race, and, for shorter or longer periods, were graduated according to income. To a great extent they had sustained the state treasury as well as municipal governments after the loss of corporate property. Impressively healthy Chicontepec finances sustained the growing network of municipal schools studied in Part One of this thesis. However, the revolutionaries in power in 1916-1917 had a different view of these taxes, which they proposed to abolish as part of their plans to reorganise national revenue in a more rational and efficient manner.<sup>56</sup>

The taxation bill (*Proyecto de Ley de Hacienda*) succinctly outlined their arguments. First of all, they believed that the head tax was unjust; it was simply not fair '*to tax a person for the simple fact of his existence*'; it was wealth, not life, that should be taxed. They then recognised the fact that state treasuries gained considerable revenue from such imposts but found they had 'many disadvantages' (which were not discussed). The argument closed with a remark of federal distrust towards local government: local authorities must not retain this impost because they '*have routinely extorted money from taxpayers, especially the indigenous*

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<sup>55</sup> Luis Aboites, *Excepciones y privilegios*, pp. 31-45. Mauricio Merino, *Gobierno local, poder nacional*, pp. 77-82. 234-239.

<sup>56</sup> On the general principles and arguments for fiscal changes in 1917 see Luis Aboites, *Excepciones y privilegios*, pp. 62-66.

*class*'. The rhetoric was conveniently revolutionary and would become a typical justification for fiscal centralisation. However, the 1917 bill did not merely abolish a tax tarnished by its antecedent in tribute, but substracted resources from states and municipalities.<sup>57</sup>

The legislators who authored the 1917 bill rejected the state governments' argument against abolition of head taxes. According to the state authorities these imposts fulfilled an important political role by '*bringing the indigenous class close to the authorities in order to better know their needs and procure their development and progress*'. To this, the authors of the bill responded that the Indian often tried to avoid such payments, getting as far away as possible from the authorities, and that the government had many other resources to integrate '*the indigenous class*', namely '*schools, roads to increase the mobility of commodities and people, statistics, telegraphs, telephones, etc.*'

With the changes promoted by the new government, including the taxation bill, the post-revolutionary state was transforming its relationship to the indigenous population from a link based mainly on the personal impost or head tax, to one based on social policies and modern communications. Predictably, as the revolutionaries inherited the liberal faith in education, schools came first in the list of 'government resources' to integrate Indians. Surprisingly, agrarian reform was excluded from the resources listed in the taxation bill, but among

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<sup>57</sup> According to the 1917 taxation bill, the states of Chiapas, Guerrero, Hidalgo, México, Puebla and Tlaxcala collected head taxes, and Campeche, Oaxaca and Tabasco had recently abolished them. 'Proyecto de Ley de Hacienda propuesto como modelo para la unificación de las Leyes Fiscales de los Estados', México 3 Jan 1917, *POEP*, Sección de Leyes del Gobierno General, Jan-Aug 1917. For federal distrust of local government see Luis Aboites, *Excepciones y privilegios*.

revolutionary policies, the *ejido* and the federal schools had the greatest role in the new articulation between the state and the population.<sup>58</sup>

Yet, as will be seen in Chapters Five and Six, federal schools, the key instrument of revolutionary cultural and educational policy, did not arrive in Cuetzalan or Huehuetla until the late 1930s, and even then only to villages outside the municipal seats. Instead, with the Chicontepec tax abolished and no federal support, schools were funded by so-called '*donativos voluntarios*', a peculiar arrangement reached between the population and the local government, encouraged by the regional cacique Gabriel Barrios, and later recognised by the state government. The story of how these 'voluntary donations' emerged and functioned since the late 1910s in Cuetzalan and Huehuetla (as in many other parts of the Sierra) will be told in the coming chapters. Suffice to say now that it was, to a great extent, a survival of head taxes, a *de facto* Chicontepec. It provides a good example of the weakness of the post-revolutionary state but, at the same time, of its capacity to appropriate local society's efforts and present them as its own. Additionally, in Huehuetla, agrarian reform, the other key and new form of articulation between state and the people, was halted by sturdy resistance from landowners, an issue that will be explored in Chapter Six, insofar as it provides the background to the workings of local government and the plight of schools. But let us first outline what happened to tax collection in the 1910s and the state's efforts to compensate for the loss of head taxes in the 1920s.

During the 1910s revolutionary leaders encouraged civil disobedience by ordering their followers not to pay taxes to authorities. Similarly, when unwanted revolutionaries seized power, Juan Francisco Lucas would order the population to

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<sup>58</sup> For this new articulation, as regards agrarian policy, see Luis Aboites, *Excepciones y privilegios*,



stop payments.<sup>59</sup> With contradictory orders from opposing factions, and constant demands for war supplies, it comes as no surprise that municipal presidents lamented their inability to collect monies and uphold order.<sup>60</sup>

As early as July 1911 the *contribución personal* which mainly fed the state coffers but also filled the municipal treasuries, was abolished.<sup>61</sup> The Chicontepec tax was not yet affected and the Sierra authorities tried, and sometimes succeeded, in raising the school tax through the revolutionary years to 1917. But before the end of 1917, the abolition of head taxes was enshrined in Puebla's new Constitution.<sup>62</sup> Responding to multiple petitions from *Ayuntamientos*, governor Alfonso Cabrera issued a decree in December 1917 ruling that urban and rural property taxes (*impuesto predial*), which formerly benefited mainly the state treasury, were to fund only municipal expenses. A minimum of fifty per cent of its proceeds would go to education.<sup>63</sup> But a recalcitrant population made collection difficult. In Zacatlán, the municipal president had to send constant reminders to

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pp. 228, 251. For federal schools see Mary K. Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution*.

<sup>59</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, p. 283.

<sup>60</sup> For the Vazquistas's abolition of taxes after their seizure of a number of towns in the Sierra see David G. LaFrance, *The Mexican Revolution in Puebla*, p. 126, n. 89 and for the municipalities' financial problems more generally, pp. 154-157.

<sup>61</sup> David G. LaFrance, *The Mexican Revolution in Puebla*, pp. 103-106, 154. AMC, box 128, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 135. Relativo al decreto de 20 de julio de 1911 que deroga la ley de 22 de marzo de 1893, sobre contribución personal', Zacapoaxtla 16 Aug 1911.

<sup>62</sup> See Título I, cap. II, art. 6. of the 'Constitución Política del Estado Libre y Soberano de Puebla', Puebla 30 Sep 1917, *Periódico Oficial del Estado de Puebla (POEP)*, vol. XCIX, no. 14, Puebla 2 Oct 1917.

<sup>63</sup> For the pre-1917 *predial* see AMH, box 37, Presidencia, Libro de Acuerdos para el año de 1916, Proyecto de ley de ingresos y presupuesto de egresos para el año 1916, entry for 18 Dec 1915. Rendón discusses *predial* in Porfirian Tlaxcala and Puebla, Ricardo Rendón Garcini, *El Prosperato*, p. 28. For the 1917 *predial* see 'Decreto de 3 de Diciembre de 1917 que autoriza a los Ayuntamientos y Juntas Auxiliares para cobrar un impuesto predial', *POEP*, vol. XCIX, no. 26, Puebla 25 Dec 1917.

the municipalities to collect the *predial* decreed in 1917 and Huehuetla failed to raise enough revenue from *predial* to sustain its schools.<sup>64</sup> By 1921 the new governor of Puebla thought it best to revoke the 1917 decree.

During the government of Constitutionalist Alfonso Cabrera (1917-1920), José María Sánchez, who was an Obregonista and who opposed Cabrera, urged his followers not to pay taxes.<sup>65</sup> Yet when he reached power, he wasted little time in decreeing new imposts. Aware of the precarious situation of municipal treasuries, in 1921 Governor Sánchez (1921-1922) authored two decrees to provide funds for municipal schools. He raised the *adicionales*, which were not taxes in themselves but a percentage added to already existing imposts on property, commerce and licenses. The 2 July 1921 decree increased *adicionales* so that all the extra revenue would go to municipal coffers, with half of it to fund education. The government's justification for this decree merits attention.

Sánchez was a former Zapatista who enjoyed support from small farmers and landless peasants in Tepeaca and Tepexi (in the centre and south of the state) and knew the details of everyday administration in the *municipios*. Although Sánchez's agrarian credentials did not endear him to Sierra leader Gabriel Barrios, the new governor shared with serranos a belief in municipal autonomy.<sup>66</sup> The decree's justification sorely lamented the demise of head taxes, which had hitherto provided sufficient funds for the municipalities' expenses, including schools.

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<sup>64</sup> AMH, box 60, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 2. Hacienda. Relativo a que se procure que la contribución de 2 y 4 al millar de fincas urbanas y rústicas se cobre con toda regularidad', Antonio Olvera Martínez to Presidente Huehuetla, Zacatlán 8 July 1920.

<sup>65</sup> Timothy Henderson, *The Worm in the Wheat. Rosalie Evans and Agrarian Struggle in the Puebla-Tlaxcala Valley of Mexico, 1906-1927* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), pp. 95-98. David LaFrance, *Revolution in Mexico's Heartland*, pp. 159, 165.

<sup>66</sup> Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, pp. 79-80.

Moreover, the Chicontepec tax had been paid voluntarily and punctually, overcoming the common 'repugnance' to taxation, which was attributed to the 'ignorance' or the 'political passion' of the population. The state government concluded that the success of Chicontepec lay in the fact that the fees were graduated according to income and decided by local authorities, and because taxpayers could see the fruits of their investment. Regretting the constitutional prohibition of head taxes, the state executive sought to replace them with *adicionales*. It was hoped that the collection of *adicionales*, which simply increased the fee for existing taxes, would face fewer obstacles than those encountered after the 1917 decree on property taxes.<sup>67</sup>

In December Sánchez's government further increased *adicionales*, on this occasion to dedicate them 'exclusively to the sponsoring of public instruction'. However, taxpayers also resisted *adicionales*, and when collected, the proceeds were insufficient to sustain schools. Similar attempts under governor Froylán Manjárez (1922-1923) equally failed.<sup>68</sup> Ultimately, the most efficient way to sustain schools, wherever the tentacles of the Ministry of Education did not reach or were not welcome, was the population's 'voluntary donations'.

If the Revolution brought little good news to Puebla's *municipios* in fiscal terms, politically it was bad news too. The erosion of local autonomy experienced by the municipalities in the Porfiriato was deeply accelerated by the armed revolution. When revolutionary groups entered the Sierra, whether they were supported or not by Lucas and Barrios, they not only bankrupted local treasuries

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<sup>67</sup> AGEP-SEP-MPE, box 34, 'Exp. no. 2. Decreto creando el impuesto para los fondos de instrucción', 2 July 1921. 'Decreto de 2 de julio de 1921', *POEP*, 26 July 1921.

<sup>68</sup> Decreto de 7 de diciembre de 1921, *POEP*, 20 Dec 1921. Decreto de 23 de octubre de 1923, *POEP*, 4 Dec 1923.

through multiple war exactions, but often imposed outsiders upon local authorities, fuelling violent factionalism. The fragile equilibrium of power achieved in the Porfiriato was lost. However, from 1919 and with Gabriel Barrios in command of the federal *Brigada Serrana*, efforts to reconstruct authority at the local level took effect. Still the successive governors that ruled -or tried to rule- the state during the 1920s brought mainly conflict and few benefits to the pueblos.

If the new tax decrees, well-intentioned but clearly ineffectual, made little difference to municipal finances, the intervention of the state executive in the appointment of *Ayuntamientos* had a greater, albeit negative, impact on local government. At a time when Gabriel Barrios was trying to keep order in the Sierra and succeeding to a considerable extent, the imposed governor Froylán Manjárez (1922-1923) and the elected governor Claudio N. Tirado (1925-1926) intervened in the Sierra to change municipal governments, thus disturbing a precarious balance as well as providing opportunities for the weaker factions to take over.<sup>69</sup>

In March 1922, the Sonoran Froylán Manjárez was appointed to the Puebla executive by the federal congress as a measure to defuse the tension unleashed by Sánchez's agrarian reform projects. For Cuetzalan, Manjárez brought no more than heightened factionalism through his allies in Zacapoaxtla, who were opposed to the alliance between Gabriel Barrios and the Flores in Cuetzalan. The dispute would explode into serious conflict under the governorship of Claudio N. Tirado (1925-1926). Tirado's authoritarian style gained him more enemies than allies. His intervention in Cuetzalan resulted in a dual administration with the legitimate council in 'exile' in a ranch near the municipal seat, and complicated the already existing dispute between teachers and authorities. For its

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<sup>69</sup> Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, pp. 73-74, 81-86.

part, Tirado's interference in Huehuetla momentarily but revealingly broke the inter-ethnic balance achieved in the previous decades. The 'hidden transcript' of Totonac political identity, embedded in a fiscal relationship with the state, was revealed in a justification for an Indian-only plebiscite to elect the local council.<sup>70</sup> Although the local government returned to normal, the imbalance provoked by the state government's intervention showed the precariousness of local order, and of the provision of education that came with it. The full story is told in the coming chapters.

## Conclusion

This section has argued that the resources and autonomy of the municipalities were undermined through the process of political and fiscal centralisation that started in the Porfiriato and accelerated during the Revolution. Autonomy was lost first through the armed revolution's destruction of the local order that allowed for tax collection and, later, through the revolutionary government's decision to abolish head taxes, including the Chicontepec. In doing so, an effective form of sustaining schools was terminated.

The erosion of municipal autonomy was a long-term structural process that culminated in the revolutionary years. Upon these fragile municipalities, it was anticipated that political centralisation could easily be built. However, during the instability of 1920s, federal and state authorities were too weak to make effective use of such potential centralisation. With head taxes abolished and unable to create a tax system to fund education, federal and state governments left

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<sup>70</sup> James C. Scott, *Domination and the arts of resistance. Hidden transcripts*. (New Haven: Yale

impoverished communities to run themselves. What the pueblos of the Sierra did, when left on their own, will be the subject of the following chapters.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Cuetzalan During The Revolution**

This chapter examines the impact of the Revolution upon Cuetzalan's government and education. The Revolution brought non-Indian unity to an end, with mestizo merchants, secretaries and teachers allying with revolutionary factions against the long-established non-Indian elite. Seeking to restore order, the non-Indian elite allied themselves with the eventually triumphant Constitutionalists, headed by Nahuatl leader of the Sierra Gabriel Barrios. The Nahuas of San Miguel Tzinacapan also supported Barrios in order to protect their communities from the revolutionaries' abuses and intervention in local councils. Although the worst of revolutionary violence was over by the end of 1919, heightened factionalism affected schools, as the non-Indian elite in the council wrangled with teachers allied with the rival faction. But in terms of public education the greatest change brought about by the revolution was the destruction of the tax system that had sustained schools until the 1910s. As a response to the abolition of the Chicontepec tax, the headtown of Cuetzalan and the Nahuatl communities in the municipality organised themselves to sustain schools. With the breakdown of political order, the lines between private and public had become blurred. In Cuetzalan the authorities sought to collect donations and petitioned the state government for support but eventually found that private education was a more effective alternative. By contrast, in the Nahuatl localities of San Miguel Tzinacapan, Reyesogpan and Yohualichan, with the help of Gabriel Barrios's

soldiers and the use of traditional forms of organisation, they managed to collect 'voluntary donations' from all adult males in order to fund their schools.



## **I. The Dissolution Of The State**

This section begins with an account of the order and progress achieved in Porfirian Cuetzalan. In 1888 the non-Indian elite took over the municipal presidency from Nahua rebel Francisco Agustín Dieguillo. Thereafter, a conservative liberalism eclipsed the popular liberalism of Francisco Agustín. Nahuas, however, retained some influence in the administration through a *juez de indios* in the headtown and Indian councils in the pueblos. Nahua custom was preserved in syncretic religious ritual and an accommodation was reached between Indians and non-Indians who shared in the patron saint celebrations of the cabecera and the pueblos. The revolution, however, brought an end to Porfirian peace, making it evident that the unity of non-Indians was fragile. Wealthy but politically weak families and a middle class of secretaries and teachers joined revolutionary factions to fight the established elite. Additionally, the incursions of the revolutionaries resulted in the ransacking of treasuries, and disorder and violence meant that villagers refused to pay taxes. Once the worst of revolutionary violence was over, reconstruction came at the hands of Nahua Gabriel Barrios who joined the Constitutionlists and succeeded Juan Francisco Lucas as regional cacique. The municipality's peculiar history of agrarian tensions and inter-ethnic relations meant that both the non-Indian elite of Cuetzalan and the population of Nahua San Miguel Tzinacapan joined Barrios in seeking to re-establish order in their localities. The second section will explore how schools were affected by these events and what were the achievements and shortcomings of the alliance between Gabriel Barrios and a faction of Cuetzaltecos.

During the rule of the liberal Montaña party in the Sierra, accommodation was reached between the non-Indian migration of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the original Indian population. A network of upwardly mobile Indian and Mestizo caciques who gained an Indian following, the Montaña also allied themselves more or less reluctantly with more conservative non-Indians in control of regional commerce and local administration. In Cuetzalan, the Nahua agrarian rebel and National Guard commander Francisco Agustín Dieguillo, who enjoyed the support of the Montaña, became municipal president after a popular election in the 1880s. However, his power receded after the last Montaña governor left the executive in 1884 and the largely Indian National Guards were demobilised by Porfirio Díaz in 1888. It was precisely after 1888 that Jesús Flores repeatedly occupied the municipal presidency, alternating with other non-Indians such as José María Huidobro, José del Carmen Mora and Aparicio Calderón.

Although non-Indians' power had been checked during the presidency of Dieguillo (1877-1887), their relative strength had been demonstrated since the signing of a pact on 1 March 1877. The families prominent in the local economy and administration vowed to put differences aside and work together for the progress of the municipality. The pact was honoured. Indeed, the presidency of Dieguillo probably strengthened it as these families shared interests that ran counter to those of the Nahua leader. Once non-Indians recovered municipal government at the headtown, as well as control of the subject pueblos through the appointment of secretaries, there was little to unsettle their political domination. The situation of this non-Indian elite in Cuetzalan after 1888 was symptomatic of

the Montaña leaders' loss of power in the state capital and of influence upon the central government, their accommodation with Creole and Mestizo settlers in municipal headtowns, and the unforeseen but inevitable loss of power by Indians.<sup>1</sup>

Typical of the non-Indian settlers of the Sierra, the Flores, Huidobro, Calderón and a few other families owned the most important sugar mills and rum (*aguardiente*) distilleries in the municipality as well as the commercial houses that provided for local demand. Taking a step further Jesús Flores introduced coffee cultivation in 1870. By the turn of the century, his son José María Flores began mechanisation of coffee processing after his visit to the plants in Córdoba, Veracruz. The younger Flores introduced machinery for pulping, drying and hulling coffee beans, setting up the first coffee processing plant in 'El Rosario', a forty-hectares estate located in San Andrés Tzicuilan, bordering the headtown.<sup>2</sup>

Inevitably the Flores and their allies, a dozen of white families settled on Nahua land, saw in Francisco Agustín Dieguillo a rival. He was, after all, an Indian opposed to the ambitions of the self-called *gente de razón* and capable of effective military as well as civil leadership. His last bid for rebellion in 1894, when non-Indians had already taken over, was described by those who felt threatened as an attempt at caste war. In truth, Francisco Agustín Dieguillo stood for popular liberalism and agrarian radicalism while the white families of

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<sup>1</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan', pp. 205-258. Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, p. 260. Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968. Testimonios de un legado documental*. (Manuscript, 2000), pp. 174-185. AMC, box 7, 'Exp. no. 18. Reconciliación habida entre todos los vecinos de esta cabecera', Cuetzalan 1 March 1877.

<sup>2</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Montaña y Llanura in the politics of Central Mexico'. Jorge Flores, *Los arrieros. Su importancia en el desarrollo económico y social de la Sierra de Cuetzalan*. (Puebla: Author's Edition, 2000), pp. 81-86, 91-92, 98-99. AMC, box 19, Presidencia. 'Noticia de los establecimientos comerciales, industriales, fabriles y agrícolas que existen en esta localidad', Cuetzalan 31 July 1884.

Cuetzalan identified with a developmental liberalism, the positivistic order and progress being a favourite slogan in theory and practice.

Notably, this Porfirian elite -an ethnic minority facing a militantly resistant Indian population- had stopped short of the land-grabbing occurring elsewhere in the country. Covering a mere 40 hectares, El Rosario was the third largest estate in the municipality, after two ranches of 200 and 50 hectares.<sup>3</sup> This elite also showed a conciliatory attitude to Indians as demonstrated in its attitude to *faenas* (unpaid labour for public works) which they requested with as much tact as had Francisco Agustín Dieguillo. In spite of no longer being recognised by the liberal legislation, a degree of autonomy for Indian types of government was allowed.

Some of the Indian forms of government prevalent in the pueblos during the Porfiriato have already been discussed in the preceding chapters. It is perhaps no surprise that the pueblos, identified as 'regions of (cultural) refuge' by twentieth-century anthropologists, retained their peculiar civil-religious cargo systems. But in the 'Mestizo metropolis' of Cuetzalan, the council, even when headed by non-Indians, also made concessions.<sup>4</sup> Resembling colonial practice, there existed a mayor who represented the Indian population exclusively (called *alcalde de indios* by non-Indians and *alcalde maseual* by the Nahuas). This mayor was elected by a plebiscite of the Indian male residents. The practice continued throughout the nineteenth century and into the 1920s, when the *alcalde de indios*

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<sup>3</sup> Carolina Ramírez Suárez, Gabriel Jaimez Ramírez and Pablo Valderrama Rouy, *Tejuan titalnamikij. Nosotros recordamos el pasado*, Colección de Lecturas Históricas de Puebla, no. 95 (Puebla: Secretaría de Cultura, 1992), p. 42.

<sup>4</sup> Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *Regiones de Refugio. El desarrollo de la comunidad y el proceso dominical en Mestizo América* (México: Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, 1967).

took the title of *juez* as there was officially only one mayor or municipal president.<sup>5</sup>

While a handful of non-Indian families consolidated their economic and administrative control, vowing to leave differences aside in the name of order and progress, they faced an influx of newcomers that would eventually unsettle the balance achieved. Among them, Miguel Vega Bernal arrived with his family from the nearby district of Tlatlauqui, to settle in Cuetzalan during the late Porfiriato. He was remembered in late twentieth-century San Miguel Tzinacapan as a wealthy landowner and *aguardiente* producer who held official posts in Cuetzalan's town hall. Indeed by 1889 Miguel Vega owned a distillery which matched in size that established in 1876 by José María Calderón. By the 1900s he also owned a sugar mill and his son Salvador Vega Bernal had his own distillery. Nonetheless, the Vegas' status and influence were still inferior to those of the established non-Indians led by Flores.<sup>6</sup>

The positivistic liberalism of non-Indian Cuetzalan, in contrast to the more radical liberalism of the Montaña leaders of the mid-nineteenth century, was far from being anticlerical. While in 1881 (during the presidency of Francisco Agustín Dieguillo) Montaña *jefe político* Lauro Luna had started a dispute with Arcadio Arrieta, a Cuetzalan priest who was determined to prevent expropriation

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<sup>5</sup> On *faenas*, AMC, box 93, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 152. Actas relativas a la Junta popular sobre trabajos voluntarios para reparación de caminos públicos', Xocoyolo 16 Oct 1905 and Tzicuilan 3 Nov 1905. On Indian *alcaldes*: Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan', p. 216 and AMC, Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el Año de 1924, entry for 28 Jan 1924 and Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el Año de 1927, entry for 1 Aug 1927. TTOSA, *Tejuan*, p. 127.

<sup>6</sup> Keith Brewster, *Caciquismo in post-revolutionary Mexico*, pp. 228, 231. TTOSA, *Tejuan*, pp. 208, 399-404. Jorge Flores, *Los arrieros*, pp. 91-92, 98-99. AMC, box 77, Presidencia, 'Noticia Estadística Industrial', Cuetzalan 22 Dec 1902.

of the parish house; in the 1890s the Flores, Huidobro and Calderón rallied around the new parish priest, José María Gutiérrez. Gutiérrez opened a school in 1896 under the name Colegio de la Soledad and sustained it through the difficult years of the armed revolution until 1926 when federal anticlerical policies reached Cuetzalan, forcing his successor, Nicolás Díaz, to leave.<sup>7</sup> The parish-funded Colegio de la Soledad, and the private schools opened by teachers linked to it, were clearly a non-Indian affair, listing in their records the names of children of the more and less prominent *gente de razón*.<sup>8</sup> As seen in Chapter Two, the opening of these private schools reduced attendance at municipal schools. Men and women who studied and taught at the Catholic schools of Cuetzalan, such as Miguel Arrieta, Agustín Becerra, Manuel Urcid, Rosario Varela, Hermelinda Pérez and Telésforo García, later instructed children at the municipal schools or opened their own private schools.

Another possibility open to these literate men and women was to work in the surrounding villages. Such was the case with Agustín Becerra who settled in the Nahua pueblo of San Miguel Tzinacapan as schoolmaster and secretary. His two sons and one daughter all worked from an early age in Tzinacapan's schools. Antonio assisted his father and later replaced him as schoolmaster while his sister Luz was in charge of the girls' school during the 1890s and 1900s. Antonio and

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<sup>7</sup> On Lauro Luna's dispute: AMC, box 12, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 104. El jefe político ordena sea entregada la casa del Ayuntamiento en que actualmente habita el presbítero don Luis G. Rodríguez que se le compró al Sr. Cura don Arcadio Arrieta', Zacapoaxtla and Cuetzalan, Sept 1881. In the early 1920s the wives of the Cuetzalan non-Indian elite formed a Centre of Catholic Ladies, which organised fundraising for the Nicolás Bravo school. Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, pp. 121, 127-128.

<sup>8</sup> AMC, box 55, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 118. Relativo a las noticias de escuelas particulares que pidió la jefatura política', Cuetzalan 30 Sep 1896; box 93, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 146. Relativo a datos de estadística escolar del presente año', Cuetzalan 19 Nov 1905.

Agustín later joined the Tzinacapan philharmonic corps.<sup>9</sup> Whether they stayed in the headtown or tried their luck as secretaries and teachers of the surrounding pueblos, this emerging middle-class of literate men and women and their descendants would eventually represent one more threat to the power of the established elite.

Politically, the Cuetzalan's elite's alliance with the parish priest, which mirrored the conciliation with the Church underway in Puebla and Mexico City, was a means of diluting the popular liberalism and agrarian radicalism of Dieguillo.<sup>10</sup> But at the same time, the Cuetzalteco *gente de razón* remained within the always broad and all-embracing liberal discourse. They simply leaned towards the conservative end of a flexible liberalism. For instance, the speeches read in Cuetzalan at the Independence celebrations of 1888, the year Jesús Flores took over from Dieguillo, imaginatively blended patriotic liberalism with positivistic liberalism, religious beliefs and, notably, Hispanicism. Miguel Arrieta, long-time schoolmaster and president of the *Junta Patriótica*, and Antonio C. Torres, the town hall's scribe and official orator for the ceremony, remembered in their speech the banner of the Virgin of Guadalupe (whom Torres called Virgin of Anáhuac), held by Hidalgo upon calling for rebellion. It did not escape the more religious Cuetzaltecos that this was a priest inciting rebellion, but the balance was

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<sup>9</sup> ASMTz, box 50, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 141. Acta de protesta que otorgó el C. Agustín Becerra Secretario de la Junta Auxiliar de este pueblo', Tzinacapan 10 June 1895 and Instrucción Pública, Letter no. 124, Miguel Juárez to Presidente Cuetzalan, Tzinacapan 27 May 1895; box 55, Instrucción Pública, Acta de examen de la escuela Zaragoza, Tzinacapan 1 Dec 1897; box 62, Presidencia, Libro de Acuerdos de la Junta Auxiliar de Tzinacapan para el año de 1900, entry for 6 Jan 1900; box 66, Presidencia, Acta relativa al ingreso de nuevos miembros en el Cuerpo Filarmónico, Tzinacapan 5 March 1901; box 68, Presidencia, Libro de Acuerdos de la Junta Auxiliar que regirá durante el año de 1902, entry for 8 March 1902

<sup>10</sup> Mary K. Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution*, pp. 113, 114.

struck by the various invocations of order and progress in speeches hailing peace and industriousness for bringing advancement, while deploring those who tried to sow the seeds of conflict. Presumably, when the Cuetzalteco *gente de razón* invoked the Virgin of Guadalupe, or Anáhuac, a symbol of *mestizaje* seeking to reconcile Indian and Hispanic roots, they envisioned a 'reconciliation' ruled by themselves.<sup>11</sup>

Arrieta additionally praised Xicontécatl and Cuauhtémoc, but also extolled the virtues of Christopher Columbus. A pupil from the boys' school read a poem penned by Enrique Huidobro which celebrated Hispanic culture, listing the Iberian Reconquest hero Don Pelayo next to the Mexicans Guerrero, Hidalgo and Juárez.<sup>12</sup> That Hispanicist Huidobro continued the practice of electing *alcaldes de indios* in the 1920s attests to the flexibility of this non-Indian minority.<sup>13</sup> The Cuetzaltecos kept their distance from an overtly conservative discourse by idealising some elements of the Indian past in contrast to a negative colonial experience, by criticising monarchists and acclaiming republican values, and, above all, by glorifying the liberal Benito Juárez, especially after the 1906 commemorations.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> For the 1888 celebrations: AMC, box 27, Presidencia, unnumbered file with all the preparations and speeches for the 15-16 September 1888 Independence celebrations, see speeches by Antonio C. Torres, Miguel Arrieta, Isauro López, Enrique Huidobro, Enrique Gutiérrez, Rafael Jiménez and Domingo Sosa. The speech by Rafael Jiménez, assistant at Cuetzalan's boys' schools, was the most critical of the colonial legacy and almost proto-indigenista in tone.

<sup>12</sup> For a conservative patriotic speech mentioning Don Pelayo in mid-nineteenth century Mexico, see Rebecca Earle, "'Padres de la Patria' and the Ancestral Past', p. 790.

<sup>13</sup> AMC, Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el Año de 1924, entry for 28 Jan 1924 and Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el Año de 1927, entry for 1 Aug 1927.

<sup>14</sup> AMC, box 92, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 113. Relativo a monumentos a la memoria del B. de la Patria C. Benito Juárez', Cuetzalan 5 Aug 1905; box 93, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 133. Relativo a que el 21 de marzo próximo a una hora dada se celebrarán en las escuelas [...] unas conferencias



Religion and liberalism shared a remarkable elasticity. By 1910, with Jesús Flores occupying the municipal presidency, the parish church had considerably strengthened its presence in public life.<sup>15</sup> While elite Catholicism in Cuetzalan's headtown was at one with the priest, religion in the Indian pueblos was syncretic, organised by a complex cargo system independent of the church, and frequently anticlerical.<sup>16</sup> And yet, religious ritual brought together people within and between communities whose relationships were otherwise tense. Despite the liberal attack on church and communal property since the mid-nineteenth century, religious festivals, and most importantly the pueblo's patron saint celebrations, did not stop. But while the festival of San Francisco in the municipal seat was organised by the parish church, the pueblos' own patron saint celebrations were prepared by the *fiscales*, *mayores*, *mayordomos*, *tenientes* and *topiles* of the cargo system. Their appointment was decided by elders after discussion and consultation with various members of the community and was extended by the head of the local council (*presidente de la junta auxiliar*). Only when relationships with the parish priest were good would he ratify the appointments. Throughout the Porfiriato, authorities in the *cabecera*, whether headed by Nahuatl Francisco Agustín or non-Indian Flores, punctually sent to the pueblos written permission to celebrate their festivities and police to ensure order. In San Miguel Tzinacapan old and young Nahuas danced, the non-Indian secretary and his colleagues and *compadres* in the

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escolares que versarán sobre la biografía y obra del Benemérito Lic. Don Benito Juárez', Cuetzalan 30 Sept 1905; box 97, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 85. Relativo a la placa de Don Benito Juárez', Cuetzalan 16 March 1906.

<sup>15</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan', pp. 205-258. Mary K. Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution*, pp. 113, 114.

neighbouring pueblos organised cockfighting, and the local treasury benefited from the taxes collected from sales at market stalls.<sup>17</sup>

In some respects, despite their deep-seated belief in the inferiority of Indian culture, living in the same territory made the non-Indian Cuetzaltecos multiculturalists *avant la lettre* (if somewhat reluctant ones) rather than jacobin liberals. When it came to local ritual, pueblo schools were flexible too. For several weeks before the festivities of San Miguel took place in late September, boys were excused from school to rehearse dances of pre-Hispanic provenance as well as those of colonial origin appropriated by the Nahua as a marker of identity vis-à-vis the *koyotl* (Creole or Mestizo). Girls, who did not participate in the dances and only exceptionally do so even today, helped their mothers with the lengthy food preparation that was part and parcel of the religious festival. Migueleños today recognise the fiestas, past and present, as an exceptional time when factional conflict is momentarily suspended.<sup>18</sup> In what follows we will see just how brief and fragile such suspension could be.

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<sup>16</sup> On San Andrés Tzicuilan's anticlericalism see, for instance, AMC, box 6, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 16. Referente a una queja que pone el Presidente de San Andrés Tzicuilan por unos abusos que cometió el Cura párroco de esta Villa', Cuetzalan and Tzicuilan, 28-31 March 1875.

<sup>17</sup> ASMTz, box 29, Presidencia, Libro de Sesiones y Acuerdos de la Junta Auxiliar de San Miguel Tzinacapan para el año de 1883 (LSA 1883), entry for 10 Nov 1883; box 31, Presidencia, LSA 1884, entry for 20 Sep 1884; box 35, Presidencia, LSA 1885, entry for 17 Oct 1885; box 37, Presidencia, LSA 1888, entry for 21 Sep 1888; box 39, Presidencia, LSA 1889, entry for 7 Sep 1889; box 41, Presidencia, LSA 1891, entry for 31 Aug 1891; box 50, LSA 1893, entry for 25 Sep 1893. Sporadic records of Tzinacapan's fiestas appear in Cuetzalan, too. See, for instance, AMC, box 27, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 202. Invitación que hace la Junta Auxiliar de Tzinacapan para que la corporación municipal de esta Villa concurra a la función titular de aquel pueblo', 26 Sep 1888.

<sup>18</sup> ASMTz, box 29, Presidencia, LSA 1883, entry for 10 Nov 1883; box 66, Presidencia, Silverio Mora to Serapio Galicia, Tzinacapan 30 Aug 1901 and box 68, Silverio Mora to Serapio Galicia, Tzinacapan 20 Nov 1902. Comisión Takachiualis and PRADE, *La autoridad como solidaridad*.

## Revolution

While opposition to Porfirio Díaz and Governor Mucio Martínez mounted in Puebla City in 1909, the municipalities of the Sierra Norte showed no inclination to defect from the government and went about their everyday lives undisturbed.<sup>19</sup> The Pax Porfiriana seemed so solid in Cuetzalan that in February 1909 the municipal seat and its four subject pueblos, each sporting a different name for their political club - 'Liberty and Progress' in Cuetzalan and 'Equality' in San Miguel Tzinacapan- wrote and signed almost identical statements of support for the candidacies of Porfirio Díaz and Ramón Corral to the Presidency and Vice-Presidency. The lists of presidents and secretaries of the clubs revealed the firm grip on the administration of the non-Indian elite and of their less privileged allies in the pueblos.<sup>20</sup>

Upon the eruption of the revolution in November 1910 Juan Francisco Lucas, the Nahua Patriarch of the Sierra, remained loyal to government and even

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*Vigencia, valor y potencialidad de los cargos tradicionales indígenas en una comunidad Nahuatl* (San Miguel Tzinacapan, 2000), available online <http://www.redindigena.net/takachiualis/indice/doc3.html> (2 March 2004). Alain Ichon, *La religión de los totonacas en la Sierra* (Mexico: INI, 1990), pp. 377-464.

<sup>19</sup> David G. LaFrance, *The Mexican Revolution in Puebla, 1908-1913. The Maderista Movement and the Failure of Liberal Reform*. (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1989), ch. 1.

<sup>20</sup> The presidents of the clubs were: Jesús Flores in Cuetzalan; Serapio Galicia (former secretary of Tzinacapan who had caused considerable disturbances in 1875) in San Andrés Tzicuilan; secretary Silverio Mora (*compadre* of Serapio Galicia) in Tzinacapan. Members and supporters in Tzinacapan included the non-Indian schoolteacher David Corona and a majority of Indian names. AMC, box 116, Presidencia, Club Libertad y Progreso de la municipalidad de Cuetzalan, Cuetzalan 28 Feb 1909; Club Unión del pueblo de Xocoyolo de la municipalidad de Cuetzalan, Xocoyolo 28 Feb 1909; Club Igualdad del pueblo de Tzinacapan, Tzinacapan 28 Feb 1909; Club Libertad del pueblo de Tzicuilan, Tzicuilan 28 Feb 1909. For David Corona as teacher of Tzinacapan, see

sent troops to Puebla City to defend the old regime. Nevertheless, the rule of the Montaña and Lucas' power had by then considerably weakened *vis à vis* central government. The accommodation reached in the Sierra during the Porfiriato proved fragile when power broke down at the centre. What looked like a relatively solid regional hegemony showed cracks. The rebellion emerging in different parts of the country provided an opportunity for disaffected serranos to try to replace established local elites.

The 1910s saw the continuous accommodations and changes of alliance at regional level as a result of serrano leaders' attempts to preserve as much autonomy as possible for their region. As elsewhere in the country, in serrano towns and villages a deep-seated factionalism, which had somewhat receded during the Porfiriato but never died, resurfaced with the opportunity to rebel against the established elites who controlled town councils and the local economy. The different revolutionary groups gaining national profile provided an opportunity to express local grievances and dissent while conveniently adopting the label of the group with the greatest promise of holding power nationally.<sup>21</sup> In Cuetzalan the Vega Bernal family sought political power to match or enhance their growing wealth. Rivals of the long-established Flores family, the Vega Bernals saw their chance. Since the Flores group initially remained loyal to the government and subsequently supported those who took federal power, it made sense for the Vega Bernal to take the side of the rebels, first Madero and then Villa, in the hope that they would seize power. With less support than the Flores,

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AMC, box 123, Instrucción Publica, 'Exp. no. 68 Relativo a la visita de Inspección practicada a las escuelas de este municipio por el inspector C. Francisco C. Cortés', Cuetzalan 19 Feb 1910.

<sup>21</sup> Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution. Volume I. Porfirians, Liberals and Peasants* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 188-189.

the Vega Bernal never managed to control Cuetzalan during the armed revolution. But they did break up the balance of power achieved in the Porfiriato. Moreover, the Vega Bernal's connections with Wenceslao and Ignacio Macip in Zacapoaxtla bore fruit in 1922-23 when Froylán Manjárez occupied the state executive. Víctor Vega Bernal (son of Miguel) finally got the opportunity to take over Cuetzalan's administration in 1922-23 but ultimately failed to replace the Flores as the dominant group in the municipality.

While Juan Francisco Lucas remained loyal to the old regime, in 1910, Miguel Arriaga, long-time enemy of the Montaña, rebelled in the name of Madero and took over the municipal council and the *jefatura política* of Zacapoaxtla. A greater blow to Lucas's position came in January 1911 when his former allies, the Márquez of Zacatlán, also pronounced in favour of Madero. By May 1911 the rebels had captured all major towns in the Sierra. Porfirio Díaz had already forced Puebla state governor, Mucio Martínez, to step down and on 25 May Díaz himself left the country after his resignation.<sup>22</sup>

Warnings of the armed revolution had been spreading in Cuetzalan since March 1911, and on 4 May the municipality suffered the first attack from 80 Sierra Maderistas led by Esteban Márquez. They sacked the treasury and looted commercial houses while the authorities found themselves unarmed and defenceless. A few days later the Cuetzalan council headed by Jesús Flores decided to withdraw support for Díaz and recognise Madero's government. On 16 May 1911 they held elections to form a new local council which remained within the Flores group. For his part, Miguel Vega had already rebelled in the name of Madero before the Cuetzalan council did. If Zacapoaxteco Miguel Arriaga can be

described as a 'last-minute revolutionary', much the same could be said of his Cuetzalteco ally Miguel Vega. Alan Knight's observation of the quality of the second wave of Maderistas fitted both: '...for many of these new leaders the name of Madero meant little more than a vague source of legitimacy and an opportunity to confer a national label on local squabbles'.<sup>23</sup>

The fact that the Cuetzalan council defected to Madero did not deter Vega, who with Miguel Arriaga's support from Zacapoaxtla, ousted the Cuetzalan authorities on 17 May. Indignant, Flores and his group made their way to Puebla City to seek redress. Flores described Arriaga as 'a pensionary of the Díaz Government' and an opportunist revolutionary, while conveniently hiding his own support for the old regime and very late conversion to Maderismo.<sup>24</sup> For the Flores, positivist liberals of the old regime, the Maderista label was a survival strategy, just as for the Vega Bernals it was an opportunity for advancement. Nonetheless, the Flores' background fitted Puebla's official Maderismo. Interim governor Rafael Cañete was a former supporter of the old regime and as a Maderista belonged to the moderate wing, in contrast to the more radical popular element of Maderismo personified in the already deceased Aquiles Serdán. In the Sierra, the Flores were the equivalents of Cañete in Puebla City. On 21 September 1911 Cañete recognised the Flores council. For their part, San Miguel Tzinacapan's Nahua authorities followed a course parallel to Cuetzalan's creating

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<sup>22</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 280-282. David LaFrance, *The Mexican Revolution in Puebla*, pp. 59-61.

<sup>23</sup> Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution*, vol. I., pp. 189, 236. AMC, box 130, Presidencia, 'Exp. No. 114. Relativo a la entrega de los rebeldes en esta población cuyo hecho tuvo lugar el día 4 del actual', Cuetzalan 5 May 1911. ASMTz, box 87, Presidencia, Jesús Flores to Presidente Tzinacapan, Cuetzalan 14 March 1911. Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, pp. 104-107.

<sup>24</sup> Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution*, vol. I., p. 236.

a Maderista club on 23 June 1911 at the initiative of former non-Indian teachers Agustín Becerra, Antonio D. Becerra and David Corona, the latter a former signatory of the pro-Díaz re-election manifesto.<sup>25</sup>

By November 1911 when Madero took office, Juan Francisco Lucas was backing the new government. However, early in 1912 Madero faced the Vazquista rebellion.<sup>26</sup> In Puebla former Maderistas disillusioned with the imposition of Nicolás Meléndez as governor joined the Vazquistas. Miguel Arriaga and his followers in the Sierra also defected to Vázquez. Lucas remained loyal to Madero and in fighting the Vazquistas he shuffled district and municipal authorities throughout the Sierra and ordered the population not to pay taxes. There started a long period when serranos would receive increasingly frequent and contradictory orders from the different factions vying for power in the region.

The coup of Victoriano Huerta against Madero and the former's government from February 1913 to July 1914 furthered reconfigured alliances in the Sierra. In an attempt to protect the already faltering autonomy of the region, Lucas signed the 28 October 1913 Sierra Pact whereby he offered to maintain a neutral peace and Huerta promised the withdrawal of federal troops. A Brigada Serrana under the command of Lucas and Márquez, financed by Mexico City, would be in charge of peace-keeping duties. Reflecting what would become a compulsory item in revolutionary manifestos and pacts, the 1913 Sierra Pact included the promise to provide free elementary schooling to all starting in 1914. However, the Márquez brothers broke the pact early in 1914, pronouncing for the

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<sup>25</sup> ASMTz, box 87, Presidencia, 'Club Pascual Orozco', San Miguel Tzinacapan 23 June 1911. On Cactico see David G. LaFrance, *The Mexican Revolution in Puebla*, p. 17.

Constitutionalists. The latter were suspicious of Márquez and made him share command of the Sierra forces with Antonio Medina, a man of their choice and an outsider to the Sierra. Fighting became more violent and widespread throughout the region, with Carrancistas advancing and capturing town after town. For his part, Márquez had grown disaffected with the Carrancistas for sending him to the south of the state, away from his home and power-base. After a disillusioned Márquez pronounced for Zapata and Villa, Juan Francisco Lucas, supported by the Riveras in Xochiapulco and the Barrios in Cuacuila (Zacatlán), allied with Carranza in January 1915. By September Gabriel Barrios of the Nahuatl village of Cuacuila was in command of one of the two battalions that comprised the federal *Brigada Serrana* still headed by Juan Francisco Lucas.<sup>27</sup>

Revolutionary turmoil was experienced differently in Puebla City, Zacapoaxtla, Cuetzalan and San Miguel Tzinacapan. The timing of the greatest violence varied even between neighbouring villages, just as it varied between states and regions in the country. In the municipality of Cuetzalan the years 1912-1914 witnessed some disturbance but apparently no major disruptions. In San Miguel Tzinacapan in 1912, the year of the Vazquista rebellion, authorities and population went about their everyday lives. *Faenas* were requested as usual and there were attempts to revive the now neglected music band. Scandals due to drunkenness, which could have been related to factionalism, were the greatest

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<sup>26</sup> Emilio Vázquez Gómez represented 'a range of political opposition to Madero from disaffected professionals to labourers expecting more out of the revolution' and later allied with rebel Pascual Orozco, see David G. LaFrance, *The Mexican Revolution in Puebla*, pp. 126 ff.

<sup>27</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 282-295. Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution*, vol. I., pp. 55-56. Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, pp. 43-45.



threat to public order.<sup>28</sup> Nonetheless, the forays of different revolutionary groups demanding money and material contributions for their forces occasionally disturbed the functioning of the administration and would soon become a regular feature of life in the Sierra. In May, the *Migueleros* were forced to send \$1000 to Miguel Arriaga, the former Maderista of Zacapoaxtla who had now defected to Vázquez.<sup>29</sup>

In contrast to the closure of schools in Puebla City and other municipalities throughout the state, in Cuetzalan all nine schools existing since the Porfiriato were open in 1912. There were two schools each in Cuetzalan, San Miguel Tzinacapan and San Andrés Tzicuilan (within the jurisdiction of Tzicuilan, there was a third school in the *barrio* of Zacatipan) and one each in Xocoyolo and Yancuitlalpan. The teachers and assistants of the boys' and girls' schools in the municipal seat were regularly paid with Chicontepec funds. In the boy's school in Cuetzalan it was the deteriorated state of the wooden roof, rather than any political turmoil, which deterred some parents from sending children to school.<sup>30</sup> Throughout 1912 and 1913 schools in Cuetzalan had regular visits from the authorities and took assessments and exams on the expected dates. Attendance throughout the municipality was no different from that prior to the resignation of

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<sup>28</sup> ASMTz, box 89, Presidencia, Libro de actas de sesión durante el año de 1912, entries for 11 May, 29 June, 27 July, 3 and 24 Aug 1912.

<sup>29</sup> AMC, box 137, Presidencia, 'Exp. Relativo al empréstito de \$1000 impuesto por el jefe revolucionario Miguel Arriaga', Tzinacapan 21 May 1912.

<sup>30</sup> David G. LaFrance, *Revolution in Mexico's Heartland. Politics, War, and State Building in Puebla 1913-1920* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2003), p. 27. AMC, box 137, Presidencia, 'Exp. Relativo a las visitas practicadas a las escuelas del municipio', Cuetzalan 15 May 1912; Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. Relativo a las actas levantadas con motivo de los reconocimientos trimestrales practicados en las escuelas del municipio', 1 Oct 1912 and Tesorería, 'Corte de Caja de Cuetzalan', 31 Oct 1912; box 138, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. Relativo a Exámenes', Dec 1912 and 'Exp. Relativo a las noticias de faltas de asistencia habidas en las escuelas', year 1912.

Díaz.<sup>31</sup> In the summer of 1913 Cuetzalan still collected Chicontepec taxes, apparently without resistance, and the council reported they had enjoyed several months of tranquillity.<sup>32</sup>

With hindsight, some incidents may be seen as premonitions of the complete breakdown of order and the unleashing of violence that was to come, but the contemporaries' perceptions were different. In August 1913, when the Constitutionalists entered Cuetzalan, the schoolmistress was forced to close the school for a few days due to recurrent episodes of violence, probably skirmishes between the Constitutionalists and the Vega group. Twice in August parents came to school to take their daughters home when rumours warned that the revolutionaries were close. According to the teacher Altagracia de Lara, the situation was at its worst on 26 August, with parents panicking as they witnessed a mob of Indian men running past the school gate at the time they went to pick up their daughters. But more than trying to convey a sense of emergency, de Lara was concerned with justifying low attendance during the month of August. There was no sense that schools might need to close indefinitely.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> In December 1912, for instance, 54 boys and 38 girls sat exams in Cuetzalan and 86 boys and 22 girls were examined in Tzinacapan. AMC, box 138, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. Relativo a Exámenes', Dec 1912 and 'Exp. Relativo a las noticias de faltas de asistencia habidas en las escuelas', year 1912. AMC, Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el año de 1913, entries for 1 Jan, 8 and 15 Feb, 15 and 31 March, 3 and 14 June 1913.

<sup>32</sup> AMC, box 143, Tesorería, Corte de Caja, Cuetzalan 3 June 1913 and Presidencia, Seguridad Pública, 'Exp. no. 11 Relativo a la tranquilidad del municipio', June-Aug 1913.

<sup>33</sup> AMC, box 143, Instrucción Pública, Escuela Constancia, Altagracia de Lara to Presidente Municipal, Cuetzalan 31 August 1913.

In 1914, after the Márquez brothers of Zacatlán defected to the Constitutionalists violence was unleashed throughout the Sierra. The worst had not yet reached Cuetzalan but the schools were closed for the first part of the year. In February 1914, the Constitutionalists wrote to Cuetzalan to order that Ignacio Ortuño and Miguel Vega Bernal be constantly watched and arrested in case of rebellion. When the Márquez replaced officials throughout the Sierra in June 1914, the Commander at Zacapoaxtla ordered the opening of schools throughout the district, just as the signatories of the Sierra Pact with Huerta had done in October 1913. Taxes ranging from \$1 to \$0.15, according to each person's economic situation, would be collected.<sup>34</sup> By October 1914, however, all the pueblos in the municipality reported the population's resistance to paying their dues or simply informed that tax collection had stopped. Nevertheless, Tzinacapan's boys' school and Cuetzalan girls' school opened in July 1914. The Cuetzalan boys' school had a belated start in November and all had had exams by the end of the year.<sup>35</sup>

Lucas' power and the autonomy of the Sierra, already on the wane, suffered further deterioration with the increased revolutionary fighting in the region throughout 1914-1915.<sup>36</sup> The consequences were felt by all, Indian and

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<sup>34</sup> AMC, box 147, Presidencia, Cuartel General del Ejército Constitucionalista Brigada Serdán, San Miguel Tenextatiloyan 22 Feb 1914 and Ejército Constitucionalista Brigada Serdán de la Sierra Norte de Puebla to Subcomandante Militar in Cuetzalan, Zacapoaxtla 18 June 1914.

<sup>35</sup> AMC, box 147, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 129. Relativo a la consulta que hacen a esta oficina los subcomandantes militares auxiliares de los pueblos del municipio', Cuetzalan Oct 1914; box 148, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 110. Relativo a los exámenes generales practicados en las escuelas del municipio', Cuetzalan Dec 1914 and 'Exp. no. 22. Relativo a las noticias del movimiento escolar', Cuetzalan 3 Aug 1914.

<sup>36</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 292-298.

non-Indian, regional traders and modest peasants, unconditional supporters of Lucas and grudging allies of the Nahua patriarch. One consequence was the interruption of tax-collection. Yet this hardly brought relief to a population now in conditions of war, suffering the price rises for basic goods as well as rebels' exactions, looting and plundering. Instead of celebrating the end to municipal taxation, serranos suffered the consequences of impoverished local treasuries further undermining autonomy.

Tired of the abusive exactions and violence from the Constitutionalists, disruptions which were perceived as coming largely from outside, and going against their interests, the *gente de razón* in Cuetzalan supported an autonomist movement originating in the eastern Sierra district of Tlatlauqui. In 1915 they signed a proposal for an independent state to be formed with the municipalities of the Sierra Norte de Puebla, and parts of Hidalgo and Veracruz. This had also been a dream of Montaña leaders and was one of the few causes with the potential to unite serranos of all backgrounds. However, in the midst of revolution, this feeble attempt merely dramatised the acceleration of the region's loss of autonomy.<sup>37</sup>

The triumph of the Carrancistas and the inauguration of the period of 'reconstruction', with US *de facto* recognition of Carranza's government in October 1915, brought no relief to the Sierra. If the triumph of Carranza had not been received too enthusiastically in the country as a whole, in Cuetzalan there was a lot more to lament than celebrate.<sup>38</sup> The whole municipality suffered economic recession and the pueblos saw their councils appointed by Carrancistas

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<sup>37</sup> Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, pp. 111-112. Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 293-298. David G. LaFrance, *Revolution in Mexico's Heartland*, pp. 38, 97, 109.

<sup>38</sup> Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution. Volume II. Counter-revolution and reconstruction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 439.

such as Antonio Medina who did not know the Sierra. In his study of the Sierra, Keith Brewster has remarked that the appointment of Medina to command the *Brigada Serrana* risked losing the long-held Nahua control of military leadership in the region. Although the Nahua Barrios brothers in fact stood up to the challenge, steadily gaining ground and eventually taking over, they could not always stop the interference of outsiders like Medina in local politics. Cuetzalan was a good example. Under supervision of the Constitutionalist garrison in Zacapoaxtla, headed by Antonio Medina, Rosendo Calderón was elected municipal president in mid-April 1915. Constitutionalist Puebla governor Luis G. Cervantes ordered Medina to stop elections, but the Cuetzalan council was not affected by this.<sup>39</sup> While the election of Calderón meant continuation of the dominant group, to the satisfaction of most prominent Cuetzaltecos, in San Miguel Tzinacapan Antonio Medina's appointment of Antonio Vázquez in 1914 provoked resistance. Early in 1914 a number of Nahua men denounced Vázquez for his arbitrariness and for failing to defend the pueblo from the invasions of men who demanded money allegedly in the name of Medina. Significantly, in order to present their complaints they made their way to the Constitutionalist garrison in Xochiapulco rather than Zacapoaxtla. Antonio Vázquez, however, with the help of teachers and secretaries from the headtown, managed to occupy the presidency of Tzinacapan with few interruptions until the late 1920s.<sup>40</sup> It is unclear whether Antonio Vázquez was a Mestizo from the headtown, or one of the Nahuas who had begun to adopt Mestizo surnames, but the fact that Tzinacapan suffered a

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<sup>39</sup> David G. LaFrance, *Revolution in Mexico's Heartland*, p. 97.

<sup>40</sup> ASMTz, box 90, Presidencia, Coronel Juan Francisco Ramírez to Presidente de Tzinacapan Antonio Vázquez, Xochiapulco 25 Feb 1914.

crisis in its cargo system during Vázquez's years as auxiliary president suggests that, whether Indian or not, he did not adhere to Nahua forms of government.<sup>41</sup>

## War

The years 1915-1916 saw increasing economic difficulties. Local authorities' efforts to continue their work despite the revolutionary conflict occasionally succeeded. Most schools remained open, albeit with interruptions. Indeed, any semblance of order was temporary. On 1 February 1917 Juan Francisco Lucas died. Gabriel Barrios, a self-made rancher, son of a modest Mestizo and a Nahua mother, took over as commander of the *Brigada Serrana* aided by his soldier brothers. By the summer of 1917 the Barrios had asserted their power and Gabriel had been promoted to lieutenant colonel after defeating and killing Esteban Márquez and his surviving brothers.<sup>42</sup> As if the paternal gaze of Lucas had managed to restrain the worst of the violence, the period of greatest disruption in Cuetzalan started in 1917 with generalised resistance to tax payments, intensified with increased violence in 1918 and frequent battles and skirmishes for most of 1919. But it receded by the end of the same year with a semblance of order brought by Gabriel Barrios.<sup>43</sup>

Resistance to taxes in Cuetzalan, already noted for the Chicontepec tax after October 1914, became generalised in the spring of 1917. Slaughterhouse

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<sup>41</sup> For the adoption of Mestizo surnames by Nahuas see Introduction to Part One. For the crisis in the Tzinacapan's cargo system see Comisión Takachiualis and PRADE, *La autoridad como solidaridad*.

<sup>42</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 305 ff. Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, p. 45.

<sup>43</sup> AMC, box 164, Instrucción Pública, Presidente de la Comisión Auxiliar de Educación a Presidente de Cuetzalan, 18 Feb 1920.

taxpayers (*causantes de matanza*) requested a reduction of their contributions due to the scarcity and high prices of livestock, while in July Chicontepec taxpayers refused to pay and petitioned for their old debts to be annulled. As a consequence, by mid-1917 five schools in the municipality had closed.<sup>44</sup> Four schools remained open, although the state of their respective treasuries threatened closure.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, unbeknown to these delinquent taxpayers, the Puebla state Constitution of 1917 was about to abolish head taxes, including the Chicontepec tax.<sup>46</sup> Six weeks after its publication in the *Periódico Oficial*, Cuetzalan received from Zacapoaxtla five copies of the Puebla state Constitution.<sup>47</sup> The council continued nonetheless its unsuccessful attempts to collect the imposts, including Chicontepec, until January 1918 when further announcements of the changes introduced by the Constitution were finally heard.

The year 1918, and especially 1919, finally brought the worst of war to Cuetzalan. With headtaxes officially abolished and the population ravaged by epidemics, schools finally closed down. Paths and tracks remained in complete

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<sup>44</sup> The schools open were Cuetzalan's girls' school with 50 pupils, Tzinacapan's with 60 boys and 26 girls (but only 6 girls in June) and Tzicuilan's with 23 boys. AMC, box 155, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 44 Relativo a la noticia del número de escuelas que hay abiertas al servicio público', 10 April 1917 and Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 24. Relativo a informes administrativos', 7 Feb 1917; Presidente Municipal to Presidente de Tzinacapan, Cuetzalan 8 June 1917.

<sup>45</sup> AMC, box 155, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 43. Relativo a que los vecinos de Tzinacapan se rehusan a pagar sus contribuciones', 2 April 1917, 'Exp. no. 73. Relativo a que los causantes de matanzas piden rebaja de lo que tienen impuesto, y los causantes de la contribución de Chicontepec que se les condonen los rezagos', 15 July 1917 and 'Exp. Relativo a que el regidor de hacienda avisa que no han hecho sus enteros los cobradores de Chicontepec, y muchos adeudan por matanzas', 19 Oct 1917.

<sup>46</sup> See Título I, cap. II, art. 6. of the 'Constitución Política del Estado Libre y Soberano de Puebla', Puebla 30 Sep 1917, *POEP*, vol. XCIX, no. 14, Puebla 2 Oct 1917.

<sup>47</sup> AMC, box 155, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 126. Relativo al reparto de los ejemplares de la Constitución del Estado', 15 Nov 1917.

disrepair as generalised disorder meant no *faenas* were organised. The town council changed president six times and lamented its weakness while combats and skirmishes took place between the local Constitutionalists, headed first by Celestino Gasca and later by Demetrio Barrios, and the rebellious Vega Bernal who would pronounce for Villa. The year 1918 opened with news that the Chicontepec tax had been abolished and past debts were to be condoned. The relief this might have brought to some was overshadowed by disease. While Cuetzalan escaped the typhus epidemic spreading throughout the country and reaching Puebla City in 1915-1916, disease hit hard in 1918. First a smallpox epidemic reached the municipality, with Tzinacapan most affected, but the worst was to come with the worldwide epidemic of Spanish influenza reaching a war-ravaged Mexico. The municipality of Cuetzalan was not spared. Schools closed and the influenza provoked enough deaths to open a new cemetery.<sup>48</sup>

Meanwhile rebellion would further contribute to the death toll. By February 1918, Salvador Vega Bernal, son of Miguel Vega, was in rebellion against the Constitutionalists and, after pronouncing for Pancho Villa, he obtained arms and cash. The municipal president Rosendo Calderón reported constant incursions of revolutionaries in May and June 1918. In June there was a battle between Constitutionalist lieutenant colonel Celestino Gasca, defending Cuetzalan, and rebellious troops. Gasca was held in high regard not only because of his triumphs against enemies trying to take Cuetzalan but because he fitted the ethos of the Cuetzalan elite as a 'white, progressive-minded officer who had gained considerable local respect for his efforts to protect normal social and

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<sup>48</sup> Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution*, vol. II., pp. 421-422. Luis González y González, *San José de Gracia*, p. 136. Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, pp. 113-114.



economic life in Cuetzalan'. But despite Gasca's praised work to embellish the town square, the sorry state of roads betrayed any semblance of normality.<sup>49</sup>

In 1919 Gasca was replaced with Demetrio Barrios, brother of Gabriel. Early in 1919 Cuetzalan suffered the skirmishes between Barrios' Constitucionalista forces, who were between 1000 and 2000-strong, and Salvador Vega Bernal's Villistas, who numbered 100 cavalrymen and infantrymen. Civil authorities reported disruption of political and economic life with assaults, robberies and general lack of security. Under pressure from Vega Bernal, the council stopped the municipality's tax collection in June only for it to be ordered resumed by the revolutionaries in September. Public works were paralysed due to the lack of support from the population. The authorities bitterly regretted their inability to uphold political order.<sup>50</sup>

The extent to which everyday life had been disrupted in 1918-1919 made it necessary for localities to take sides. For the majority in Cuetzalan, Barrios appeared as the best option. Cuetzalan's council initially derided Barrios' troops as 'ignorant Indians who used their military might solely to terrorise *gente de razón*' but they eventually came to terms with the change from non-Indian Colonel Gasca to the Barrios and remained loyal to the Constitutionalist cause, even if headed by Nahua men.<sup>51</sup> Beyond racial prejudices, the non-Indian

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<sup>49</sup> Keith Brewster, *Caciquismo in post-revolutionary Mexico*, pp. 232-233. AMC, box 158, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 104. Relativo al informe que rindió Rosendo Calderón, como Presidente que fue de este Consejo', 31 Aug 1918.

<sup>50</sup> AMC, box 161, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 35. Relativo a noticias de movimientos administrativos', Cuetzalan, Jan to Dec 1919. AGE-SEP-MPE, box 17, 'Exp. 120. Escuelas del municipio de Zacapoaxtla', Municipal President to Secretario General, Zacapoaxtla 3 April 1919; Abraham V. Martínez to Junta Directiva de Educación Primaria (JDEP), Cuetzalan 21 April 1919; Municipal President to Secretario General, Zacapoaxtla 8 May 1919.

<sup>51</sup> Keith Brewster, *Caciquismo in post-revolutionary Mexico*, pp. 232-233.

Cuetzaltecos probably saw that the arrival of Lieutenant Colonel Gabriel Barrios had made a difference. After defeating Vega in October 1919, Gabriel Barrios exhorted the population to contribute to the re-opening and maintenance of schools. He furthered ordered towns and villages to attend *faenas* to repair roads in a lamentable state. There was nothing new in these exhortations routinely made by all those fighting for power. Likewise, schools and roads were objectives the Flores and the Barrios shared but while the Flores had lost control, Gabriel Barrios would have the stamina and authority to make things happen. The *gente de razón* in Cuetzalan had little choice but to work with Lucas' successor. The pueblos, for their part, made their own choices.

By February 1919, most of the population of San Miguel Tzinacapan supported Barrios and stopped supplying Salvador Vega's cavalry, although San Andrés Tzicuilan continued to support Vega.<sup>52</sup> The different alliances of the two most important pueblos of Cuetzalan were a result of their recent history of relations to the elites in the cabecera. Tzinacapan had suffered the attacks of the Vega Bernals' forces, whose leader they saw as an exploitative and abusive non-Indian member of the commercial elite. Barrios offered protection from such abuses. The inhabitants of Tzinacapan nowadays remember him as a good General who armed them to defend themselves from the abusive *kojomej* (non-Indians) of Cuetzalan. The fact that Barrios allied with the Flores did not deter Tzinacapan, which, in contrast to Tzicuilan, had no history of violent conflict with the cabecera. Barrios could play his Nahua card in Tzinacapan where there had been no major agrarian dispute with the non-Indians, nor sustained support for Francisco Agustín Dieguillo's rebellion. For the Migueleños it was the smaller

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<sup>52</sup> Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, pp. 116-119.

and less powerful group of the non-Indian elite, the Vega Bernals, who in joining revolutionary violence and foraging their pueblo had provoked their anger. This case makes it clear that Barrios' takeover of the Constitutionalist forces greatly enhanced their possibilities of expanding support in the Sierra. While a Carrancismo headed by Antonio Medina had trampled on Tzinacapan's remaining autonomy by naming an unpopular auxiliary president and thus driving the Migueleños to complain to Xochiapulco, Barrios knew the workings of Nahua pueblos' politics. Indeed the alliance between Tzinacapan's Nahua leaders and Barrios, of which more will be said below, confirms Keith Brewster's assertion that a great part of the *cacique's* success was due to his Nahua pueblo background and abilities as a cultural mediator.<sup>53</sup>

Tzicuilan, by contrast, had a hostile relationship with the Flores group dating back to the times of agrarian rebellion under Francisco Agustín Dieguillo. Additionally, Tzicuileños during the Porfiriato had had tense relationships with the parish priest, normally an ally of the Flores. When the revolution broke up, the Flores group were in control of the administration and most of the economic activities. The wealthy estate of El Rosario, where the Flores had first introduced coffee to Cuetzalan, located in San Andrés Tzicuilan's fertile lands and bordering with the headtown, was a constant reminder to the Tzicuileños of the enormous success and ambition of the *gente de razón*. When Vega rebelled against the established Flores group in the 1910s, with Dieguillo's leadership long replaced by the Flores and Cuetzalan's agrarian rebellion a thing of the past, it must have made sense for Tzicuileños to support Vega. From Tzicuilan's point of view, Barrios might have been Indian but in the Flores he had obviously chosen the

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<sup>53</sup> TTOSA, *Tejuan*, pp. 399-472.

wrong allies.<sup>54</sup> Thus, given the crossover of local factionalism and distinct relationships with elites in the headtown, ethnic allegiance and understanding could aid Barrios in Tzinacapan but proved worthless in Tzicuilan.

#### Gabriel Barrios versus Vega Bernal

After Barrios' triumph in October 1919, preparations were made for the re-organisation of administration in 1920. He immediately exhorted authorities and population to work for the re-opening of schools and contribute *faenas* for road repairs. He ordered voluntary donations to schools to be organised and the new lists of recommended textbooks distributed. Fruitless attempts were made to implement the recent state legislation on property taxes (*contribución predial*), part of which was to be dedicated to schools. In any case, four schools were opened on 31 December 1919. Despite the efforts made, Barrios' seizure of Cuetzalan was far from complete and the Vega Bernals had not surrendered. The weakness of federal and state governments further delayed any solution to the conflict in Cuetzalan.<sup>55</sup> The situation did not improve with the coming of Alvaro Obregón to the Mexican Presidency on 1 December 1920. Obregón hesitated to support Barrios, thus allowing Vega room for manoeuvre. Neither faction enjoyed complete support from federal government while the state government, headed by

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<sup>54</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan'. Keith Brewster, *Caciquismo in post-revolutionary Mexico*, p. 234. Interviews with Emma Flores, Cuetzalan 25 Aug and 18 Sep 2001.

<sup>55</sup> AMC, box 161, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 35. Relativo a noticias de movimientos administrativos. 16 enero 1919', Cuetzalan 1 Oct, 1 Nov, 1 Dec and 31 Dec 1919 and box 164, Hacienda, 'Exp. relativo a la implantación de la contribución predial municipal que estableció el decreto de 3 de diciembre de 1917', Cuetzalan 16 Jan 1920.

Obregón's *compadre* and agrarista José María Sánchez (June 1921- April 1922) had its own problems elsewhere. However, as complaints against Vega's troops' abuses increased, Obregón ordered Vega's battalion to be disbanded and Barrios became commander of the federal troops in the Sierra in mid-1921.

In Cuetzalan, the municipal presidency remained in the hands of the Flores group throughout 1920 and 1921.<sup>56</sup> But real power resided in military advances and triumphs. Whenever Vega or Barrios got the upper hand, as did Vega, for instance, in May 1920, he would call for the payment of taxes and the opening of schools; the moment he lost ground to the enemy, he would call on his supporters to stop any payments. Contradictory orders and troop plundering resulted in bankrupt treasuries, irregular school provision and impoverished populations.<sup>57</sup>

The appointment of Froylán Manjárez as governor of Puebla in March 1922, had important consequences for Cuetzalan. The Vega Bernals had cultivated links with prominent enemies of Gabriel Barrios in Zacapoaxtla, such as deputy Wenceslao Macip and tax inspector Ignacio Macip who were close to Froylán Manjárez. Upon Manjárez taking the governorship (March 1922-November 1923), Víctor Vega Bernal occupied the municipal presidency in Cuetzalan. Unsurprisingly, Víctor Vega faced resistance from Barrios, as federal commander of the *Brigada Serrana*, and from the Flores faction. During the first part of 1923 Vega lost no opportunity to complain against the behaviour of Barrios' troops, especially *jefe de armas* Agustín Cruz, who was working in the area of Reyesogpan and Yohualichan (within the municipality of Cuetzalan). The *jefes de*

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<sup>56</sup> Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, p. 190.

<sup>57</sup> Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, p. 120, 189. AMC, box 164, Hacienda, 'Exp. Relativo a la implantación de la contribución predial municipal que estableció el decreto de 3 diciembre 1917', Cuetzalan 16 January 1920.

*armas* headed local voluntary corps organised across the Sierra to oversee public security. Although officially their role was restricted to policing communities, in practice it extended beyond these duties as Vega's complaints reveal. The municipal president protested that Barrios' men provoked division and conflict, committed multiple abuses related to road-building *faenas* and did not help collect donations for schools. The lack of cooperation from *jefe de armas* Agustín Cruz was, of course, politically motivated. As will be seen later, Agustín Cruz was instrumental in collecting funds to open and sustain a new school in Reyesogpan, which later moved to Yohualichan, two rancherías north-east of Tzinacapan which supported Barrios.<sup>58</sup>

In July a number of Cuetzaltecos demanded the resignation of the town council. Despite attempts from Puebla City to reinstate the authorities, and among rumours of a plot to kill Víctor Vega, the Vega Bernal council decided to leave. Rosendo Calderón was elected president and took over in September 1923.<sup>59</sup> The death of Rogelio Vega Bernal, who was shot and found in Xocoyolo in October 1923, further confirmed the waning of the Vegas' power. The crime was not solved but rumours inevitably pointed to Barrios.<sup>60</sup> With the Flores group having resumed control in Cuetzalan, with Barrios enjoying a good relationship with the now governor Vicente Lombardo Toledano (Dec 1923 – May 1924) and Manjárez out of the state, the Vega Bernals had little hope of recovering power in

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<sup>58</sup> AMC, Libro de Actas para el año de 1923, entries for 26 April, 10 May, 12 June 1923 and box 173, Seguridad Pública, 'Exp. no. 49. Relativo a quejas contra Barrios y Agustín Cruz', March-April 1923. Keith Brewster, *Caciquismo in post-revolutionary Mexico*, pp. 240-241. On *jefes de armas* across the Sierra see Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, pp. 110-118.

<sup>59</sup> Libro de Actas para el año de 1923, entries for 25 and 26 September 1923. Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, p. 190-191.

<sup>60</sup> Keith Brewster, *Caciquismo in post-revolutionary Mexico*, pp. 244-245.

Cuetzalan.<sup>61</sup> The definitive fall of the Vega Bernal came after they followed the de la Huertista rebellion. When Adolfo de la Huerta rose up against Obregón, Manjárez and Víctor Vega Bernal followed while the *jefatura militar* in Puebla City, headed by Barrios's ally, General Almazán, remained loyal to the federal government. After the failure of the rebellion and with Calles taking the presidency inheriting a much stronger presidency than Obregón's, Vega Bernal surrendered in April 1924.<sup>62</sup>

#### The Final Success of Barrios in Cuetzalan

In 1925, Wenceslao and Ignacio Macip once more influenced politics in Cuetzalan. This time the Macip allied with his fellow Zacapoaxteco, Claudio N. Tirado, who headed the state executive between February 1925 and November 1926. The Macip and their allies occupied key posts in the state executive and legislature. Throughout 1925 there were claims and counterclaims regarding Barrios' and Flores' abuses concerning *faenas* for road-building. With the state executive arrayed against Gabriel Barrios, a servile Puebla press joined the attacks while Tirado's allies in Zacapoaxtla further encouraged complaints. Barrios had the federal military in Puebla and Mexico City as well as labour leader Vicente Lombardo Toledano on his side.<sup>63</sup>

In 1925 the Flores faction was elected to the council but Tirado nullified Cuetzalan's elections. The Flores managed to retain the council for the first part of

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<sup>61</sup> AMC, Libro de Actas para el año de 1924, entry for 1 Jan and 14 April 1924.

<sup>62</sup> Keith Brewster, *Caciquismo in post-revolutionary Mexico*, p. 245. Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, p. 190.

<sup>63</sup> Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, p. 77-89 .

1925 but, after multiple attacks, in August the state government finally imposed Francisco Valdés, a puppet municipal president, who would be succeeded by Andrés Patiño. The Flores faction doggedly resisted both of the imposed mayors, aided by the Gabriel Barrios's supporters from Tzinacapan, Yohualichan and Reyesogpan.<sup>64</sup> In August 1926, together with Barrios' troops, the Flores faction forced the illegitimate council to step down and leave the town. The deposed council and other members of their faction took refuge in Zacapoaxtla. Ultimately, Tirado's men in Cuetzalan could do little to fight the Barrios-Flores faction.<sup>65</sup> As will be seen in Section II, the teachers in the municipal seat as well as Tzinacapan sided with Tirado's mayors and eventually had to leave the municipality.

In 1927 the familiar name of Rosendo Calderón once more headed the Cuetzalan council. With the Flores faction back on the *Ayuntamiento*, and the state executive no longer interfering in local affairs, Cuetzalan was sufficiently calm to channel its energies into public works. Work on the new slaughter house and water installation was finally resumed. In September 1927, with seven schools functioning again in the municipality, the local *Junta Patriótica* prepared a busy programme of Independence celebrations with the usual school plays and recitations accompanied by four different local music bands including a Ladies' Orchestra (*Orquesta Típica de Señoritas*).<sup>66</sup> Surely, after the tumultuous

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<sup>64</sup> AMC, Libro de Actas para el año de 1925, entries for 7 Aug, 11 Sep, 4 and 14 Nov, 3 and 25 Dec 1925. Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, pp. 126, 192-193. Keith Brewster, *Caciquismo in post-revolutionary Mexico*, p. 248, 259-266.

<sup>65</sup> AMC, box 181, Presidencia, Telegram from Puebla to Cuetzalan, 24 Feb 1926; Secretario General R. A. Landero to Cuetzalan, Puebla 5, 6 and 8 March 1926; Telegram from Cuetzalan to Puebla, 6 March 1926; Presidente Cuetzalan to Puebla, 10 March 1926; Comandante de Policía Salvador González, Cuetzalan 14 July 1926.

<sup>66</sup> Although Cuetzalan had a long musical tradition sustained by the Philharmonic Corps, the increased number of bands was possibly an influence of local composer Miguel Alvarado Ávila.



beginning of the 1920s, things could only improve. Let us now go back in time in order to examine how schools reflected the political situation from the instability of the mid-1910s through to the difficulties of the 1920s.

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Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, pp. 193, 128. Ingrid M. Barrios Molina, 'Algunas actividades culturales en Cuetzalan a principios del siglo XX' in Víctor H. Valencia and Lesly Mellado (eds.) *Cuetzalan. Memoria e Identidad*. (México: INAH, 2000).

## II. The Reconstruction of Local Society, 1915-1929

When in 1912 caciques of all factions in the Sierra called on the population to stop paying taxes to their rivals it was unclear where the revolution was leading. But in mid-1914 the pueblos stopped paying, and resistance to taxes continued through the decade. It now became clear that the old order and, with it, the nineteenth-century municipality, were definitely breaking down in the Sierra. Insofar as public instruction was concerned, the final blow came with the abolition of head taxes in 1917. By then the provision of education had already reverted to private hands and community organisation. In the absence of federal action from the Ministry of Education, and with the state government making no more than feeble and failed attempts to sustain the schools in a few municipal seats, education remained in the hands of local societies during the 1920s. As will be seen below, the non-Indian population in the headtown of Cuetzalan made efforts to sustain municipal schools through the organisation of voluntary donations but often switched to private schooling which offered a better option. For their part, the Nahua villages, with the help of local *jefes de armas* selected by Barrios, harnessed their collective resources to the formation of local education committees and the collection of voluntary donations to sustain schools.

## Public or Private? Schools in the Mid-1910s

The years 1915-1917 would be times of increasing economic difficulties and mounting political violence, resulting in ever more recalcitrant taxpayers. Attempts to re-establish order in spite of the disruptions caused by the revolutionary conflict were sometimes successful, if only temporarily. Schools went through a cycle of closure and re-opening according to the vagaries of municipal funds in war times, and the patience of teachers who went unpaid. In the headtown the precarious state of the local treasury, unable to cover teachers' salaries, resulted in a spontaneous privatisation of schooling with the girls' schoolteacher seeking to obtain remuneration from parents further blurring the already fuzzy line between public and private in times of crisis. In the pueblos there was instability too, with teachers resigning when salaries went unpaid.<sup>67</sup> Yet, in San Miguel Tzinacapan the schools were open without major interruptions between July 1914 and September 1917. Below the cases of Cuetzalan and Tzinacapan are detailed.

In 1915 Rosendo Calderón proposed that Chicontepec fees be levied according to income. This measure had been recommended in June 1914 by the Constitutionalist forces, but it had been normal practice in Cuetzalan during the

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<sup>67</sup> AMC, box 153, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. Relativo a la apertura de las escuelas del municipio y al nombramiento del director de la escuela de niños de esta Villa', Cuetzalan Jan 1916; Francisco Domínguez to Presidente Municipal, Xocoyolo 3 April 1916; Agustín Becerra to Presidente Municipal, Tzinacapan 24 April 1916; Presidencia, 'Exp. Relativo a las actas de las sesiones de las juntas auxiliares del municipio', 14 Nov 1916 and 'Exp. no. 13. Relativo a copias de las actas de sesiones de las Juntas Auxiliares del Municipio. 12 Jan 1916', Acta de Sesión de Tzicuilan, 24 Sep 1917; box 155, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 44 Relativo a la noticia del número de escuelas que hay abiertas al servicio público', 10 April 1917; 'Exp. no. 53. Relativo a que se de noticia del

Porfiriato anyway. The problem was that, under the new circumstances, collection was irregular. As elsewhere in the state of Puebla, the prices of basic goods had increased dramatically while salaries were stagnant. Taxpayers and teachers suffered accordingly. The teachers' salaries were even lower than the \$1.50 a day earned by agricultural labourers. And even those salaries were sometimes too much for the councils.<sup>68</sup> It was in this context that a dispute arose between teacher Rosaura Pignataro and Cuetzalan's council.

Rosaura Pignataro was a qualified teacher who graduated from a Catholic School in Puebla City and started work in 1909. She arrived in the Sierra in August 1914, possibly as a result of a state government policy to send college graduates to teach in rural areas.<sup>69</sup> At first Pignataro replaced Guadalupe Luna, a former teacher in Tzicuilan who had just taken the post of assistant in Cuetzalan girls' school, where her sister María was director. After the council failed to pay the Luna sisters' salaries in Cuetzalan, they resigned. Pignataro then took over the post, receiving an appointment as temporary director of the girls' school in October 1915. She continued teaching in the year 1916 and received her salary until May. By then Cuetzalan, like the rest of the country, was suffering the consequences of an economy shattered by revolution, which resulted in a failed monetary system with twenty-one different paper currencies being recognised by

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número de escuelas existentes en el municipio', 16 May 1917 and 'Exp. no. 99. Relativo a la noticia de las escuelas existentes en el municipio', 10 Sep 1917.

<sup>68</sup> Teachers were paid \$1.32 in the municipal seat, \$0.90 to \$1 in Tzinacapan, \$0.75 in Tzicuilan and \$0.66 in the smaller pueblos. AMC, Libros de Actas y Acuerdos para el año 1915, entries for 15 April, 18 April, 15 May, 21 Aug, 9 Oct 1915. AMC, box 150, 'Exp. relativo a las actas de visitas a las escuelas oficiales del municipio' Cuetzalan June 1915 and box 151, 'Exp. relativo a las noticias de las escuelas establecidas en este municipio', Cuetzalan Dec 1915. David G. LaFrance, *Revolution in Mexico's Heartland*, pp. 117-118, 127-129.

<sup>69</sup> David G. LaFrance, *Revolution in Mexico's Heartland*, p. 132.

the government. For the first months of 1916 Cuetzalan paid its employees with paper currency from the state of Veracruz as well as 'unfalsifiable' notes (*infalsificables*) issued by the government the same year. When the supply of paper currency ran out mid-year the council stopped payments.<sup>70</sup> Pignataro continued working nonetheless. If her reports were correct, in November 1916, sixty-one girls sat exams. Early in 1917 Pignataro told the council she would ask parents for retribution if the municipality did not resume payment of her salaries. No salaries were paid in 1917.

In August, to Pignataro's outrage, the state government appointed a new teacher for the girls' school at the suggestion of the town council. When Pignataro demanded an explanation from the authorities, the municipal president claimed that Pignataro's appointment of October 1915 was temporary, which was true, and that the school had been opened without their knowledge and supervision, which was not entirely true. The authorities argued that since Pignataro was receiving payment from parents as of February 1917, the school she ran had become private, while it remained the council's responsibility to find a new teacher for the municipal girls' school. Pignataro probably did receive some payment from parents, even if she did not acknowledge it. However, the town council was not acting sincerely. Although they had no funds and had stopped paying Pignataro's salary in mid-1916, they did not hesitate to include the school she directed in their reports as a municipal school throughout 1916 and as late as April 1917. It was only when she claimed a salary or the conservation of her post that the council

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<sup>70</sup> Yancuitlalpan also complained that a confusing monetary system made tax-collection and the payment of teachers more difficult. AMC, box 153, Presidencia, 'Exp. Relativo a las actas de las sesiones de las junta auxiliares del municipio', 14 Nov 1916. On changes in the monetary system in 1916 see David G. LaFrance, *Revolution in Mexico's Heartland*, pp. 117-118.

actually put in writing that they considered the school as Pignataro's private business and recognised no duty to pay the salaries she claimed as hers.<sup>71</sup> With the council's decision not to acknowledge Pignataro's efforts and to appoint someone else as a municipal teacher, there started a tense relationship. As will be seen later on, these tensions eventually overlapped with factional antagonisms in local politics and turned into a full-fledged conflict affecting the running of schools in 1925.

As regards the girls' municipal school, the council efforts to sustain it proved in vain. The teacher who replaced Pignataro had to leave in June 1918 as the incursions of the revolutionaries resulted in scant attendance and lack of funds. There would follow the epidemic of Spanish influenza, further disturbing life in the municipality. For her part, Rosaura Pignataro finally gave up any hopes of receiving a salary as a municipal teacher and organised her own private school in 1919 under the name of Escuela Católica Teresiana.<sup>72</sup> By then, she had already contributed to sustaining the municipal school through the difficult years of 1915-1917. It was probably Pignataro's condition as an unmarried woman, with a limited choice of jobs to sustain herself, that made her persevere even when she

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<sup>71</sup> AMC, Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el año de 1915, entry for 9 Oct 1915; box 153, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 26. Relativo a las disposiciones para los exámenes de las escuelas públicas del municipio', 22 Nov 1916 and box 155, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 19. Relativo a que se propuso al superior gobierno a la Señorita Carolina Pérez como directora de la escuela de niñas de esta cabecera', 11 Aug 1917.

<sup>72</sup> AMC, box 158, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 87. Relativo a la noticia de las escuelas que están al servicio público', 27 June 1918 and Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 104. Relativo al informe que rindió Rosendo Calderón, como Presidente que fue de este Consejo', 31 Aug 1918; box 161, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 35. Relativo a noticias de movimientos administrativos, 16 enero 1919', Tzicuilan 13 Jan 1919, Cuetzalan 28 Feb, 1 May and 1 Sept 1919.

went unpaid.<sup>73</sup> With no male teacher prepared to work under those conditions, the boys' school in the headtown suffered greater instability than the girls'.<sup>74</sup>

Among the schools of the pueblos, the boys' school at Tzinacapan was the one that fared best. After a period of closure it reopened in July 1914, and by December 78 pupils had sat their exams. The school remained open throughout 1915, with the teacher's salary being punctually paid, a remarkable fact given the new conditions in the Sierra. And, although there were rumours that some in the village would have preferred the school closed, it remained open until the December examinations.<sup>75</sup> During 1916 and the first half of 1917 both the boys' and the girls' schools at Tzinacapan were funded and run just as they had been during the Porfiriato. Yet any resemblance to the smooth administration of Porfirian times was superficial. The interference of Carrancistas in Tzinacapan's council with the appointment of Antonio Vázquez eventually brought a break up

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<sup>73</sup> AGESEP-MPE, box 152, file 60.4. 'Escuelas particulares pagadas por las autoridades Zacatlán 1932', Rosaura Pignataro to Gobierno del Estado, Puebla 6 Jan 1932.

<sup>74</sup> The boys' school remained closed throughout 1915 and 1916, due to lack of funds, and underwent several closures and re-openings in the period between September 1917 and May 1919. AMC, box 151, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. relativo a la noticia de las escuelas establecidas en este municipio', Cuetzalan Dec 1915; box 153, Presidencia, 'Exp. relativo a asuntos varios de enero de 1916', Telegram from José María Flores to Agustín Aspiroz, Teziutlán 25 Feb 1916; box 155, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 99. Relativo a la noticia de escuelas existentes en el municipio', 10 Sep 1917. AGESEP-MPE, box 17, 'Exp. 120 Escuelas oficiales del municipio de Zacapoaxtla', Cuetzalan 21 April 1919, Zacapoaxtla 3 April and 8 May 1919.

<sup>75</sup> AMC, box 148, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 110 Relativo a los exámenes generales practicados en las escuelas del municipio', Cuetzalan Dec 1914; Movimiento de las escuelas de Junio a Septiembre 1914 and 'Exp. no. 22 Relativo a las noticias del estado del movimiento escolar', 3 Aug 1914.

of authority. It is then no surprise that by September 1917 the school had closed down and no exams took place.<sup>76</sup>

#### From Head Taxes to Voluntary Donations: Schools During 1920-1924

As explained in Chapter Four, after the abolition of head taxes, and given that the alternative imposts decreed by the state government proved insufficient or ineffectual, communities in the Sierra called on the population to make pecuniary contributions to the public instruction funds. The contributions were soon called 'voluntary donations', and enthusiastically endorsed by Barrios, on the basis of article 124 of the 1919 educational law, which considered that municipalities were entitled to encourage residents to contribute their donations when funds were insufficient. Conceived as complementary to public instruction funds, in practice they became the main source of sustaining schools. Whether or not the donations would be truly voluntary depended on the decision of the local authorities and the response of the population. Cuetzalan's schools continued relying on donations, and private initiative, throughout the 1920s and even after 1924, when the state government officially took over the schools in the headtown, but in fact failed to provide for them.

Constant changes between civil authorities and military control passing from Barrios to Vega in 1920-1921 make it difficult to assess each group's

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<sup>76</sup> AMC, box 153, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 26. Relativo a las disposiciones para los exámenes de las escuelas públicas del municipio', 22 Nov 1916; Presidencia, 'Exp. relativo a copias de las actas de las sesiones de las Juntas Auxiliares del municipio. 14 Noviembre 1916', Tzinacapan 17 Nov, 4 and 11 Dec 1916; box 155, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 53. Relativo a que se de noticia del número de escuelas existentes en el municipio', 16 May 1917 and 'Exp. no. 99. Relativo a la noticia de escuelas existentes en el municipio', 10 Sep 1917.



contribution to schooling. It is clear, however, that all groups vying for power had an interest in opening and sustaining schools as a form of demonstrating their concern for, and control of, the municipality's development. In any case, throughout the unstable 1920s the maintenance of schools relied ultimately in the population's capacity and willingness to provide a building and pay teachers' salaries. Insofar as the alliance between Gabriel Barrios and the Flores faction enjoyed greater support, they were more likely to boast a better educational provision.<sup>77</sup> Notably, the system of voluntary donations worked at its best in the growing village of Reyesogpan, where Barrios's *jefe de armas* enjoyed support from the community's leaders, and in Tzinacapan, where Chicontepec had sustained the best municipal school during the Porfiriato.

In June 1921 Rosaura Pignataro returned to direct the girls' municipal school in the headtown, which she directed until 1926 despite constant delays in the payment of her salaries.<sup>78</sup> Apparently undisturbed by the political turmoil, the Catholic school sponsored since the Porfiriato by priest José María Gutiérrez and, later, with the aid of his successor Nicolás Díaz and the local group of Catholic Ladies (belonging to the Flores faction), was in 1921 working with 140 pupils. A

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<sup>77</sup> During his presidency in 1923 Vega Bernal claimed eight schools were open. However, his successor, Rosendo Calderón, observed most schools had been closed under Vega Bernal. Records suggests the latter did inflate numbers. AMC, box 173, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 98 Estadística escolar que se rinde al gobierno del estado', Jan 1923; Presidente Auxiliar G. Ramos to Presidente de Cuetzalan, Tzicuilan 12 March 1923 and Presidente Cuetzalan to Zacapoaxtla, Cuetzalan 6 April 1923; Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el año de 1923, entry for 26 Sep 1923 and Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el año de 1924, entry for 14 July 1924.

<sup>78</sup> AMC, box 164, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 15, Relativo al nombramiento de la directora de la escuela Constancia', 16 Jan 1920; box 174, Instrucción Pública, Acta de examen de la escuela Constancia, Cuetzalan 19 Nov 1923. Libro de Actas para el año de 1923, entries for 27 March 1923, 26 April 1923.

mixed private school was opened by Hermelinda Pérez in the headtown in the same year.<sup>79</sup>

While education in the *cabecera* depended on the good will of Pignataro and private efforts, and schools remained precarious in the smaller pueblos, a new school opened in March 1920 in the Nahua *ranchería* of Reyesogpan, with the support of Gabriel Barrios. Reyesogpan was located northeast of Tzinacapan in the tropical lowlands and close to Yohualichan.<sup>80</sup> A further sign of the influence of Barrios in the area was that since April 1922 Reyesogpan was the only locality without the status of pueblo to have a telephone line linking it to the headtown, installed with the work of Barrios' men headed by *jefe de armas* Agustín Cruz.<sup>81</sup> All available evidence indicates that most of the population in Reyesogpan and Yohualichan supported Barrios, and that the school at Reyesogpan was open and running with the help and vigilance of Cruz. On one occasion Agustín Cruz was reprimanded by municipal president Huidobro for taking the name of Nicolás Antonio Francisco when asking for appointments for the local education council.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> AMC, box 164, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 40 Relativo a los reconocimientos trimestrales de las escuelas. 8 April 1920', Escuela Católica Nicolás Bravo, Cuetzalan 12 Sep 1920 and box 167, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia escolar' from Cuetzalan to Presidente de la Junta Municipal de Educación Pública en Zacapoaxtla, Cuetzalan 3 June 1921. Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, p. 121.

<sup>80</sup> In 1885 the population of the rancherías of Reyesogpan and Yohualichan was reported as 782 and 187, respectively, compared to 1,500 inhabitants in Tzinacapan. By 1940 they were still rancherías but they had surpassed Tzinacapan (2,093), possessing 3,230 and 2,395 inhabitants. Unfortunately, the 1921 and 1930 census have no data for these localities. AMC, box 21, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 66. Contiene la noticia estadística sobre división territorial', Cuetzalan 13 June 1885. *Sexto Censo de la Población, 1940* (México: SEN-DGE, 1943).

<sup>81</sup> Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, p. 122. Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, p. 131.

<sup>82</sup> AMC, Libro de Actas para el año de 1924, entry for 4 Feb 1924. AMC, box 173, Presidencia, Seguridad Pública, 'Exp. no. 49. Relativo a quejas contra Barrios y Agustín Cruz', March-April 1923.

Cruz's interference in matters of civil government decried by Huidobro was an example of Barrios' *jefes de armas*' procedure as much as of civil authorities' weakness. Huidobro's complaint fits with the image of a manipulative and authoritarian Barrios' *cacicazgo* and the memories of an even more ruthless Cruz. However, Keith Brewster's study warns of taking such negative portrayals, created by Barrios' enemies and subsequently developed by the revolutionary party's anti-cacique discourse, at face value.<sup>83</sup> Indeed, in the case of Cruz there are reasons to believe that at least some of his actions were widely supported by the population, which was not necessarily subjected to the arbitrary will of the *jefe de armas*. Some of the oral tradition provides a more humane picture of Agustín Cruz.

A Nahua from the hamlet of Capola, Yohualichan, Cruz attended school in Cuetzalan and learned music while he sustained himself by making rope which he sold to ranchers. The installation of the telephone line, the opening of schools and the maintenance of tracks in Reyesogpan-Yohualichan are all attributed to Cruz. Similarly to Lucas and Barrios, Cruz was a self-made man, appreciated the benefits of an education and believed in the introduction of modern traits. At the same time, he commanded respect as a Nahua who knew local custom: one participant of the 1980s oral history workshop in Tzinacapan identified Cruz as a relative of Francisco Agustín Dieguillo, thus underlining his role as a legitimate representative of Nahua peasants' interests. It is only after recognising such achievements, that a darker image of Cruz emerges with accounts of his growing authoritarianism, coercing people to provide *faenas*, delivering harsh punishment and even death to bandits and petty criminals and to his critics, and eventually

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<sup>83</sup> Keith Brewster, *Militarism*. For Agustín Cruz in particular, see p. 140.

accumulating enough offences to end up in jail with no sympathy from the population.<sup>84</sup> Barrios allegedly reprimanded him and sought to remove him from his post. To be sure, Cruz was not a harmless benefactor. Yet evidence from the school at Reyesogpan, and later at Yohualichan, confirms the kinder side of Cruz's legacy.

The committee in charge of collecting the voluntary donations for the school in Reyesogpan was formed by Indian adult men who could not sign their names. Most likely, they formed part of the community's cargo system. Far from being subjected to the will of a tyrant, the illiterate local education committee and population had a say in who taught their children. In 1921 after complaints that the teacher was not competent enough, residents stopped paying donations and only 7 children out of 130 registered were attending the school.<sup>85</sup> By 1922, after a change of teacher, registration reached 195 pupils, of whom 88 sat exams at the end of the year.<sup>86</sup> During the second part of the 1920s, still under the vigilant gaze of Cruz, the school changed location to Yohualichan and hired a dedicated teacher from Tuzamapan (Tetela) as well as an assistant. They boasted the highest

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<sup>84</sup> TTOSA, *Tejuan*, pp. 444-473. Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, p. 132-133. Katha Brewster, *Caciquismo in post-revolutionary Mexico*, p. 93.

<sup>85</sup> AMC, box 167, Instrucción Pública, Presidente Ortiz Vázquez to Gerente de Excelsior, Cuetzalan 28 April 1921; Presidente Cuetzalan to Ranchería Reysogpan, Cuetzalan 27 April 1921; Nicolás Antonio Francisco to Presidente Cuetzalan, Reysogpan 23 May, 8 August 1921; Presidente de la Junta Municipal de Educación to Presidente de Zacapoaxtla, Cuetzalan 3 June 1921 and 'Noticia que consigna los datos relativos a las escuelas oficiales y particulares de este departamento municipal', Cuetzalan 11 Aug 1921.

<sup>86</sup> AMC, box 167, Instrucción Pública, Presidente Cuetzalan to Presidente de la Junta Municipal de Educación Pública en Zacapoaxtla, Cuetzalan 3 June 1921; Presidente Municipal to Presidente Cuetzalan, Zacapoaxtla 27 June 1921; Presidente de la Junta Municipal de Educación Aspiroz to Presidente Cuetzalan, Zacapoaxtla, 1 July 1921 and 'Noticia que consigna los datos relativos a las escuelas oficiales y particulares de este departamento municipal', Cuetzalan 11 Aug 1921. AMC, box 170, Instrucción Pública, Acta de Examen de la escuela Madero de Reyesogpan, 28 Nov 1922.

attendance in the municipality. What Huidobro denounced as forgery, with Cruz taking the name of Nicolás Antonio Francisco to request appointments from the headtown, was no more than Cruz acting as the literate mediator between the uneducated Nahua *ranchería* and Cuetzalan. Ultimately, Reyesogpan-Yohualichan's school attendance attested to the potentially fruitful consequences of the pact between an ambitious and literate Nahua leader co-opted by Barrios, and a peasant population who put its collective resources to good use.<sup>87</sup>

It was the community's collective organisation that sustained the second best attended school in the municipality. The school in San Miguel Tzinacapan, which had closed down in mid-1917, reopened in mid-1920 coinciding with Vega Bernal getting the upper hand in Cuetzalan, although the municipal presidency remained in the hands of the Flores group. The auxiliary president of Tzinacapan at the time was still Antonio Vázquez, the man who had been appointed by Carrancista Antonio Medina. Vázquez was now an enemy of the Flores group and presumably on good terms with Vega Bernal. He was supported by Francisco Domínguez and Justo Martínez who occupied, respectively, the posts of teacher and assistant in Tzinacapan's school, and were linked to the anti-Flores faction in Zacapoaxtla. Tzinacapan's population's majority support for Barrios did not stop them paying donations to sustain the school in 1920. Domínguez and Martínez received their salaries punctually and 89 boys were examined at the end of the 1920. The school continued to be open in 1921.<sup>88</sup> School funding, therefore, appeared to enjoy a degree of independence from political conflict. However, when the Flores faction was ousted and Víctor Vega Bernal took over the

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<sup>87</sup> AMC, Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el año de 1924, entries for 3 and 10 Nov 1924.

<sup>88</sup> AMC, box 168, Instrucción Pública, 'Programa de Independencia', Cuetzalan 25 Sep 1921 and Francisco Domínguez to Cuetzalan, Tzinacapan 10 Sep 1921.

municipal presidency in 1922-1923, the school closed down. Given that there is no evidence to indicate increased economic problems at the time, the school closure suggests that ultimately Tzinacapan withdrew support for official projects whenever they considered the authorities in Cuetzalan's *Ayuntamiento* to be illegitimate (or perhaps were under Barrios' orders to do so).<sup>89</sup>

In 1924 for the first time the state government took over the headtown's schools. By the end of the year, the state's educational administration had made a bad impression in Cuetzalan. Instead of appointing the teachers proposed by the town council they appointed their own, none of whom turned up to take up the post. But it was the financial administration that failed most. While Cuetzalan paid its taxes and *adicionales* punctually, the payment of salaries suffered continued delays throughout 1924 even though they only had to pay one salary, that of the girls' schoolmistress, as the boys' school remained in disrepair and closed. By the end of the year the town council requested authorisation to re-organise the collection of donations. Ample permission was given to Cuetzalan early in 1925, on condition that a commission was formed to administer the funds. José María Flores headed the commission, Rosendo Calderón was treasurer and two women María C. Luna (former municipal teacher) and Hermelinda Pérez (private school teacher) were members.<sup>90</sup> Thus Cuetzaltecos were ready to organise themselves

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<sup>89</sup> AMC, box 164, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 36. Relativo al establecimiento de una escuela particular para niños en Xiutccuapan, Rcycsogpan a la que se puso el nombre de Francisco I. Madero', 17 March 1920, 'Exp. no. 40 Relativo a los reconocimientos trimestrales de las escuelas', June, September 1920, 'Exp. no. 53. Relativo a la inspección pedagógica de las escuelas oficiales y particulares', 23 June 1920; box 165, Untitled file containing exam reports, Rcycsogpan and San Miguel Tzinacapan, Nov-Dec 1920.

<sup>90</sup> As most teachers during the Porfiriato and the first decades of the twentieth century, María Luna had completed her primary studies but had no qualification as a teacher, see AMC, box 188, Instrucción Pública, Escuela subelemental de niñas Constancia, Cuetzalan 5 Dec 1929. AMC,

and pay for their schools. When they next had news of the state government in 1925, it was first to depose their elected council and then to promise to cover teachers' salaries that were never paid.

### Diverging Paths: Cuetzalan and the Nahua Pueblos

In 1925 Cuetzalan suffered the imposition of two puppet municipal presidents, Francisco Valdés and Andrés Patiño, by governor Claudio N. Tirado. When they arrived in Cuetzalan they found in teachers Rosaura Pignataro and Manuel Urcid, and the state school inspector for the Sierra Samuel Pérez, three effective allies in defaming the Flores faction. But by siding with the Tirado-imposed authorities, who promised relatively generous state-funded salaries, the teachers had chosen the weaker faction and would eventually have to leave town. Teachers in Tzinacapan also sided with the Tirado-faction, only to suffer persecution by Barrios's local *jefe de armas* and be forced to flee the Nahua pueblo.

The director of the boys' school in Cuetzalan, Manuel Urcid, was nephew of Mariano Urcid, an alderman who had some disagreements with the Flores faction. Teacher Rosaura Pignataro, after years of badly paid or unpaid work, had lost patience and sided with Urcid. Pignataro had also lost the trust of the Flores faction. José María Flores wanted to appoint his preferred teacher, from a private school, as municipal teacher as soon as he succeeded in ousting Pignataro. In January 1925 Pignataro accused the council of not wanting to pay teachers' salaries and of looking for an excuse to fire her and Manuel Urcid. In a report to Puebla City, inspector Samuel Pérez confirmed Pignataro's complaints. He

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Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el año de 1924, entries for 28 Jan, 7 April, 12 May, 4 Aug, 13 Oct,

believed the conflict to be entirely political, a matter of which local faction the teachers supported, rather than a question of the teachers' competence or suitability. But schooling clearly suffered the consequences. No reports of Cuetzalan's schools were sent to Puebla City in March, as the town under the Flores was considered 'withdrawn from state government control'.<sup>91</sup> Pignataro and Urcid closed the schools but reopened when the state-appointed municipal president Francisco Valdés took over the council. Pignataro and Urcid might have entertained hopes that their situation would improve. Indeed, Valdés asked for official appointments for the teachers which were received on 19 August stating salaries of \$3 per day for each school director funded by the state budget. But the teachers waited in vain for their payments during 1925. In January 1926 the state educational administration drastically reduced staff and fired the teachers in Cuetzalan. The attempts of Valdés to preserve Pignataro's and Urcid's jobs proved fruitless and the arrival of Patiño brought an end to any support from the council.<sup>92</sup>

In late 1925 Plácido M. Rodríguez and a number of Cuetzaltecos of the Flores faction, dissatisfied with the work of Pignataro and Urcid, wrote to the state

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3 Nov and 4 Dec 1924; Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el año de 1925, entry for 5 Jan 1925.

<sup>91</sup> AGE-SEP-MPE, box 48, 'Exp. 112. JDEP. Cuadros relativos a estadística que remiten los inspectores foráneos', Reajuste económico de la tercera zona escolar del estado, Enrique Huerta, Teziutlán 29 March 1925.

<sup>92</sup> AGE-SEP-MPE, box 60, 'Exp. 59.2. Cuetzalan', Rosaura Pignataro to JDEP in Puebla, Cuetzalan 13 Jan 1925; Rosaura Pignataro to Samuel Pérez, Cuetzalan 14 January 1925; Inspector Samuel Pérez to JDEP in Puebla Teziutlán 30 January 1925 and reply of 19 Feb 1925; President Francisco Valdés to Secretario de Gobierno, Cuetzalan 12 Aug 1925; JDEP to Cuetzalan, Puebla 19 Aug 1925; President Francisco Valdés to Rufino Landero, Secretario de Gobierno, Cuetzalan 1 Sep 1925; Manuel Urcid to Samuel Pérez, Cuetzalan 14 Oct 1925; box 72, 'Exp. no. 62.2. Escuela de Cuetzalan del Progreso', Cuetzalan to Puebla, 19 Jan 1926 and Puebla to Cuetzalan 26 Jan 1926.



government requesting two graduate teachers. President Patiño, either trying to compromise with the Flores faction to prevent further antagonism, or being too weak to do anything else, respected and even supported the request for new teachers. Although there were clearly political motives for the Cuetzaltecós' desire to fire the anti-Flores teachers, the fact that they offered an extra \$30 a month for each new teacher, in addition to the salary provided by the state government, lends some credence to their claim that they wanted better educated or more professional teachers. New teachers were appointed and Pignataro and Urcid left.<sup>93</sup>

Compared to the violence and factionalism of the previous years, the latter part of the 1920s was relatively quiet. But the appointment of teachers continued to be a source of contention. In March, Antonio Vázquez Martínez received from Puebla his official appointment to Cuetzalan's school but faced opposition from Rosendo Calderón. Vázquez Martínez belonged to a group of local literate men, like Filomeno and Justo Martínez in Tzinacapan, who depended on salaried jobs.<sup>94</sup> As mestizos from the headtown they probably identified with the Flores faction,

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<sup>93</sup> AGEP-SEP-MPE, box 72, 'Exp. 62.2. Escuela de Cuetzalan del Progreso', Jan to Dec 1926 and 'Exp. 67 Inspector Aurelio C. Merino, Tercera zona de Tetela, Zacapoaxtla and Tlatlauqui', Inspector Francisco Echeverría transcribes letter from Cuetzalan residents to JDEP, Zacapoaxtla 18 Jan 1926. AMC, box 181, Presidencia, 'Exp. Num. 4. Relativo a que se sostengan a los maestros locales de esta Villa, por petición del Sindicato Septentrional Serrano de Oficios Varios de Cuetzalan', Cuetzalan 1 Feb 1926 and Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 2. Relativo a la solicitud de profesores para la dirección de las escuelas oficiales de esta Villa', Cuetzalan Dec 1925 – March 1926.

<sup>94</sup> Vázquez Martínez had been educated in Cuetzalan's school and then became a teacher in Tzinacapan during the Porfiriato. In the early 1920s he had the post at Cuetzalan's boys school for a time and was later secretary in Tzicuilan. ASMTz, box 69, Instrucción Pública, Estado de movimiento de la escuela Zaragoza, Antonio V. Martínez, Tzinacapan 30 April 1902; box 75, Presidencia, Jesús Flores to Presidente de Tzinacapan, Cuetzalan 20 Aug 1905; box 78, Instrucción Pública, Gabriel Antonio to Presidente de Cuetzalan, Tzinacapan 17 May 1906.

rather than with the Nahua allies they could gain in the pueblos, but they resented the power of this dominant group. While the Flores owned the best estates, distilleries and coffee processing plants, the Martínez's properties were similar in size to those of any Nahua peasant and their share of local trade never went beyond the ownership of a small shop. As Filomeno and Justo Martínez showed, when there was an opportunity to oppose the dominant faction they took it. It is therefore no surprise that Calderón tried to get rid of Antonio Vázquez Martínez.<sup>95</sup> Killing two birds with one stone, he could get graduate teachers rather than men with a three- to five- year primary education and possibly more ambition than vocation. Despite some hesitation from Puebla, Calderón eventually managed to get official appointments for two graduate teachers.<sup>96</sup> However, in mid-June, a familiar story was once more rehearsed: the teachers were dismissed due to lack of state funds to pay their salaries; they remained in their posts until the end of the year, possibly receiving some money from donations, but resigned in December.<sup>97</sup>

The state government was in principle committed to paying the salaries of two school directors (as usual a male teacher for the boys' school and a female teacher for the girls') during 1927. But given its disappointing performance in the previous years it comes as no surprise that Cuetzalan's schools opened in January with the support of the Captain Manuel Cabrera (under the orders of Barrios) and were sustained by voluntary donations. In June the state government officially

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<sup>95</sup> AMC, box 183, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. sobre diversos asuntos correspondientes al ramo de la instrucción por los meses de marzo a junio del año 1927', Presidente Municipal to gobernador del Estado, Cuetzalan 26 April 1927.

<sup>96</sup> The female teachers had graduated from the Methodist Teaching Training College in Puebla in 1923. AMC, box 183, 'Exp. con diversos asuntos correspondientes a instrucción para los meses de marzo a junio de 1927', Presidente Rosendo Calderón to Puebla, Cuetzalan 17 Marzo 1927.

admitted it would be unable to pay any salaries and Calderón encouraged Cuetzaltecos to contribute donations to prevent the closure of schools. The municipal president was right in pointing out that given state's incapacity, the schools were dependent on Cuetzalan's population's generosity. But hard-pressed taxpayers demanded a serious stance from the government. The local traders, supported by President Calderón, unsuccessfully tried to get Puebla City to agree to pay for teachers. They attributed the schools' frequent openings and closures over the past two years to local political disorders as well as the neglect of Governor Tirado and the authorities more generally. The petitioners argued that they were up-to-date with the payment of their commercial license taxes (*patentes*), which included an additional percentage specifically assigned to education (*adicionales*), and concluded that teachers should be paid out of state funds rather than private donations. Cuetzalan's traders and well-to-do residents felt that under the current difficult circumstances they would have to stop either the additional tax or the donations. There were, unfortunately, no results. The teachers presented and had accepted their resignations by the end of the year.<sup>98</sup>

Despite Cuetzalan's taxpayers' petition, the following year the town continued to pay the additional taxes as well as donations, given the fact that the state did not contribute to educational expenses. In 1928 both the boys' and girls'

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<sup>97</sup> AGEP-SEP-MPE, box 82, 'Exp. 46. 3 Escuelas de Cuetzalan', Correspondence between the Junta Directiva de Educación Primaria and Cuetzalan, March to Dec 1927.

<sup>98</sup> AGEP-SEP-MPE, box 82, 'Exp. 46.3. Escuelas Cuetzalan', JDEP to Antonio Vázquez Martínez, Puebla 17 March 1927; Antonio Vázquez Martínez to JDEP, Cuetzalan 20 April 1927; JDEP to Cuetzalan 26 April, 11 May and 17 June 1927; Comerciantes y vecinos de Cuetzalan to Gobierno del Estado, Cuetzalan 18 June 1927; Presidente Municipal to Gobernador del Estado, Cuetzalan 20 June 1927; JDEP to Cuetzalan 26 Nov and 29 Dec 1927. AMC, Libro de Actas para el año de 1927, entry for 20 June 1927.

schools were running.<sup>99</sup> At the same time, a private school directed by Telésforo García (former student of the parish-funded school during the Porfiriato) was running. García was a former teacher in the Catholic school as well as the municipal school and had close links to the Flores faction including a *compadre* in the current council. While García's school attendance grew, that of the municipal boys' school decreased until there were no more than a dozen pupils and the payment of the teacher's salaries were behind. The teacher, called Jesús González, denounced the situation as a boycott, while the council, parents and local education committee (*junta auxiliar de educación*) argued that González was a negligent instructor who often left the school during opening hours, did not keep all the documents required, did not teach all the subjects in the programme and had not carried out the students' quarterly tests but nonetheless took his vacation.

There is no evidence of political factionalism in this case so we may assume that González was indeed a bad teacher. Captain Manuel Cabrera supported González by confirming the flow of students from the municipal to the private school and the delay of salaries, but Gabriel Barrios saw no reason for dispute with the Cuetzalan council. By August, González had left.<sup>100</sup> Thus the

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<sup>99</sup> AMC, box 185, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 3 Documentos que corresponden al mes de marzo de 1928', Presidente Municipal to Gobernador del Estado, Cuetzalan 2 Marzo 1928. AGEP-SEP-MPE, box 117, 'Exp. 49.3. Cuetzalan', Puebla 9 Feb 1929; Cuetzalan 1 April 1929; Jesús González to Gobernador del Estado, Cuetzalan 11 and 24 July 1929; Presidente Municipal Alfredo Gutiérrez to Secretario General de Gobierno, Cuetzalan 24 July 1929 and Secretario Municipal Rafael Sánchez A. to Inspector, Cuetzalan 25 July 1929. AMC, box 187, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp.no. 47. Relativo a las deficiencias de la escuela oficial de niños de esta cabecera', Cuetzalan 1 April 1929.

<sup>100</sup> AMC, box 187, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 48. Relativo a los oficios 8 y 9 procedentes de la Jefatura de la Guarnición de esta cabecera que se refieren a los padres de familia que han retirado a sus hijos de la escuela Juárez', Cuetzalan 2, 5 and 8 April 1929 and 'Exp. 65. Relativo al sobresueldo del director de la escuela de niños de esta cabecera C. Jesús González', April 1929;

parents of Cuetzalan retained control of what schooling their children received, without bothering to complain against the officially appointed teacher. After all, if the teachers' salary was ultimately dependent on their donations, what was the difference between public and private schools, other than the nuisance of getting the government's approval and appointments for the former? It is clear that in 1929 Cuetzalan there was yet little sign that an educational system, let alone the apparatus of a stronger nation-state, would emerge after the revolution.

Let us now turn to the Nahua pueblos. The schools in Tzinacapan had been closed for most of 1922-1924. In mid-1924 Justo Martínez, who had already been teaching assistant in Tzinacapan in 1920, went back to the pueblo to take his state appointment.<sup>101</sup> Martínez had links with the anti-Flores Macip in Zacapoaxtla and, consequently, Enrique Huidobro, who was then municipal president in Cuetzalan, refused to recognise the appointment decided by the state government without consulting Cuetzalan. Martínez would only manage to take his post after the Flores faction left the council in 1926.<sup>102</sup>

In 1926, once Justo Martínez had already taken his post in Tzinacapan, with support from the auxiliary president Antonio Vázquez, hostility from the population became apparent. According to the reports of Vázquez and to their own complaints, Secretary Filomeno Martínez and teacher Justo Martínez were

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Presidencia, 'Exp. 94. Relativo a la solicitud de un profesor para la escuela oficial Benito Juárez de esta cabecera', Cuetzalan 10 Aug 1929.

<sup>101</sup> AMC, Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el año de 1924, entries for 18 Feb and 10 Nov 1924.

<sup>102</sup> Justo Martínez's sister, Concepción, obtained a state appointment as director of the Tzinacapan girls' school in 1925 and, in contrast to her brother Justo, she found no resistance from Cuetzalan. Being a woman, she might have been deemed harmless by the Flores faction. AGEP-SEP-MPE, box 60, 'Exp. 59.2. Cuetzalan', Concepción Martínez to Diputado Wenceslao Macip, Zacapoaxtla 27 Jan 1925; Secretario General to Concepción Martínez and Justo Martínez, Puebla 9 Feb 1925;

being threatened by armed men in Tzinacapan in the first months of 1926. The authorities felt threatened too. Justo Martínez identified José Hilario of Tzinacapan, who was accompanied by other Indian men from Yohualichan, as one of the perpetrators of the offences. After a formal accusation of attacks on property and death threats, Martínez and Hilario were called to declare before the Cuetzalan Judge, Plácido M. Rodríguez. Rodríguez, who was an active member of the Flores faction, found there was not enough evidence to inculcate the man accused by the teacher. José Hilario was in fact Barrios's *jefe de armas* in Tzinacapan and, therefore, ally of the Flores faction.<sup>103</sup> Stated alongside José Hilario's civil status (married), race (indigenous) and occupation (farmer) was his age. The threatening man from Tzinacapan was eighty-five and could not sign his name. If we recall the extremely dangerous agrarian rebels of the 1860s, who turned out to be Nahua *pasados* in their eighties, Hilario's age suggests he was a *pasado* too.<sup>104</sup> Indeed José Hilario had been one of the Nahua Migueleños who in 1914 made their way to Xochiapulco to complain about the appointment of an outsider to head their council. The unidentified group of Indian men from Yohualichan who accompanied Hilario must have been supporters of Agustín Cruz, Barrios's *jefe de armas* in the Yohualichan-Reyesogpan area. If Hilario was indeed a *pasado* and therefore led and represented the pueblo's will, at the same time he was Barrios's *jefe de armas*, this would confirm the claim made by Tzinacapan's oral history that support for Barrios was a popular decision, rather than a straight-forward imposition of an ambitious Barrios or the ever dominant

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Justo Martínez to Gobernador, Zacapoaxtla 26 Jan 1925; Secretario de Gobierno to Justo Martínez, Puebla 15 Oct 1925.

<sup>103</sup> TTOSA, *Tejuan*, p. 419.

<sup>104</sup> Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan', pp. 227, 232-235.

Flores faction in Cuetzalan. This also fits with Keith Brewster's conclusion that the Barrios *cacicazgo* was far from exercising complete control over municipal and pueblo politics and that as long as serranos cooperated with Barrios in certain respects, they would enjoy a large measure of autonomy to conduct local affairs.<sup>105</sup>

After the failed accusations against José Hilario, and feeling there were no guarantees in the municipality, Filomeno and Justo Martínez fled Tzinacapan in April. Illiterate Hilario had won over the village scribes. But not all of the anti-Flores men in Tzinacapan left. Auxiliary president Antonio Vázquez stayed and he appointed a new teacher soon after the departure of the Martínez.<sup>106</sup> In 1927 Gabriel Martínez and Ismael Tirado, belonging to the Vázquez faction, and opposed to the Flores, were elected in the plebiscite for Tzinacapan's council.<sup>107</sup> The fact that men linked to unpopular former authorities were elected suggests that there was a growing gulf between Nahua forms of government headed by elders like José Hilario, and the forms of government recognised by the municipality and the state. This is confirmed by Tzinacapan's oral history which identifies 'the revolution' and 1926 as two points of crisis of the cargo system.

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<sup>105</sup> AMC, box 181, Presidencia, Tzinacapan to Cuetzalan, 28 Jan and 27 March 1926; 'Exp. no. 27, Relativo al nombramiento del Secretario de la Junta Auxiliar de Tzinacapan', 10 March 1926; 'Exp. Relativo a la acusación formulada por el C. Filomeno Martínez, en contra del individuo José Hilario por destrucción en propiedad ajena', Tzinacapan 1926; 'Exp. no. 41. Relativo a la solicitud de garantías del C. Justo Martínez', Tzinacapan, 9 April 1926 and Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 9. Relativo al cese de Justo Martínez', Tzinacapan 16 March 1926. Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, p. 151.

<sup>106</sup> AMC, box 181, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 7 Relativo a nombramientos de directores de las escuelas rudimentarias de niños de los pueblos de Yancuitlalpan, Tzicuilan y Tzinacapan', Feb-May 1926.

When outsiders rather than members of the pueblo's cargo system were appointed to the auxiliary presidency, they alienated those who belonged to the existing civil-religious hierarchy. The intrusion resulted in the disappearance of the civil posts of the cargo system. Although this did not affect religious posts, the wave of anticlericalism in 1926 meant that they became clandestine. For San Miguel Tzinacapan this was an unwelcome revolution. Yet, community organisation persisted and the pueblo managed to sustain the school.<sup>108</sup>

Except for the disturbances against the Martínez in 1925-1926 Tzinacapan, Cuetzalan's subject pueblos largely stayed away from the type of factionalism that marred the municipal seat's schools. Given the instability of the state government, its offer to sustain schools in the municipal seat turned out to be more a liability than an advantage. Relying entirely on the voluntary donations often raised and administered as part of the cargo system, or a similar form of community organization, the pueblos were doing better than the schools at the headtown.<sup>109</sup>

In contrast to Cuetzalan and Tzinacapan, the other pueblos in the municipality had a tranquil 1926 and began to catch up, opening girls' schools and improving attendance, albeit the latter was still at Porfirian levels.<sup>110</sup> Yohualichan,

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<sup>107</sup> AMC, box 183, Presidencia, Acta sobre el plebiscito extraordinario para designar Junta Auxiliar, Tzinacapan 4 March 1927. AGEPR-SEP-MPE, box 82, 'Exp. 46.3. Escuelas Cuetzalan', Presidente Auxiliar Gabriel Martínez to JDEP, Tzinacapan 11 March 1927.

<sup>108</sup> Comisión Takachiualis and PRADE, *La autoridad como solidaridad*.

<sup>109</sup> AMC, box 183, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. Comprobantes... septiembre de 1927', Noticia que manifiesta el número de escuelas que funcionaron en 1926 y 1927; 'Exp. Comprobantes... octubre de 1927', Actas de examen de la Escuela particular Hidalgo, Cuetzalan and Escuela Constancia de Cuetzalan, 30 Nov 1927

<sup>110</sup> AMC, box 181, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 2. Relativo al informe administrativo de los pueblos de Tzicuilan, Tzinacapan y Yancuitalpan de este municipio', 4 Jan 1926; Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 7 Relativo al nombramiento de directores de las escuelas rudimentarias de niños de los pueblos de Yancuitalpan, Tzicuilan y Tzinacapan', Cuetzalan Feb-May 1926; 'Exp. no. 8. Relativo al



still a *ranchería*, continued to stand out with the steadiest and highest school registration in the municipality. The school had a director as well as a teaching assistant and was attended by children from Yohualichan and Reyesogpan, as well as other surrounding hamlets (Amatita, Xiloxochico, Tepantzingo, Tepetita and Pinahuista), all of which contributed with their donations.<sup>111</sup> In December 1927, 149 pupils took their exams in December assessed by a jury composed of non-Indian traders, members of the Flores faction.<sup>112</sup> Perhaps seeking to emulate Yohualichan-Reyesogpan, the nearby hamlet of Xiloxochico formed a local education committee and opened a school in 1928. Openings continued in a few hamlets in 1929, funded by voluntary donations which proved much more stable than the state government's measures.<sup>113</sup> As the new decade opened, the rural

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nombramiento de tesorero especial para recaudar el donativo voluntario para el sostenimiento de la instrucción de Yancuitalpan', 6 March 1926; box 183, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. Comprobantes...octubre de 1927', Escuela mixta rudimentaria, Yancuitalpan 25 Nov 1927; box 185, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 2. Documentos de la sección de educación por el mes de febrero de 1928', Yancuitalpan, 6 Feb 1928.

AGEP-SEP-MPE, box 72, 'Exp. 62.2. Escuela de Cuetzalan del Progreso', Jan to Dec 1926

<sup>111</sup> AMC, box 183, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. con diversos asuntos... de marzo a junio de 1927', Presidente Municipal to Inspector Pedagógico, Cuetzalan 6 April 1927; Yohualichan 1 and 30 June 1927; 'Exp. con diversos asuntos... por el mes de agosto del año de 1927', Yohualichan, 22, 29 and 31 August 1927; 'Exp. Comprobantes... septiembre de 1927', Movimiento de alumnos en Yohualichan, 30 Sep 1927; 'Exp. Comprobantes...octubre de 1927', Yohualichan 25 Oct 1927; Escuela Madero, Yohualichan 25 Nov 1927.

<sup>112</sup> AGEP-SEP-MPE, box 72, 'Exp. 62.2. Escuela de Cuetzalan del Progreso', Jan to Dec 1926. AMC, box 183, Estado de Movimiento de la Escuela Francisco I. Madero, Jovito de la Calleja, Yohualichan 30 June 1927.

<sup>113</sup> AGEP-SEP-MPE, box 108, Inspección de la Zona Norte por el Profesor Melquiades Vergara, Yohualichan, Cuetzalan May, June, July and August 1928; box 110, 'Exp. 45.3. Escuelas de Cuetzalan', Yohualichan Jan-Nov 1928, Yancuitalpan 1 Dec 1927, Puebla March 1928, Xiloxochico, 13 April 1928. There were further openings in Zacatipan and Pagpatapan AMC, Libro de Actas para el año de 1929, entry for 26 Jan 1929. AMC, box 187, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. 44. Relativo al acta de protesta que otorgó la Señorita Otilia de la Calleja', 4 March 1929

schools of the revolution, the pet project of the Ministry of Education, had not yet arrived at this municipality.<sup>114</sup>

### The Legacy of The Revolution

The 'reconciliation' pact signed by the Cuetzalan commercial and political elite in 1877 assured non-Indian domination throughout the Porfiriato and beyond. However, as the Flores, Huidobro and Calderón families increased their wealth and power, some non-Indians felt excluded from the spoils. They included the relatively wealthy Vega Bernal, as well as an emerging middle class of men educated in the headtown's municipal and Catholic schools, who occupied paid posts as secretaries and teachers throughout the municipality. For these men the revolution provided the opportunity to contest power, thus breaking up the fragile unity between non-Indians, and giving way to armed rebellion and rife factionalism. The continuous closure of the headtown's schools due to the lack of teachers in the 1920s (a problem unknown during the Porfiriato) was not politically innocent. Expectations had clearly risen and parents demanded better teachers but beyond this very legitimate reason, the municipal presidents' search for teachers from outside the district was an attempt to keep potential opponents at

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and 'Noticia en que constan los datos estadísticos escolares correspondientes al pueblo de Tzicuilan', March 1929.

<sup>114</sup> For the failed attempts to open a federal school in Tzicuilan in 1922-23 see AMC, box 170, Instrucción Pública, Acta de la visita del misionero Rafael Molina, San Andrés Tzicuilan 22 Jan 1922; box 171, Instrucción Pública, Acta de examen de la escuela Rayón de Tzicuilan, Avclino M. Sierra, 1 Dec 1922; box 173, Instrucción Pública, Presidente Auxiliar G. Ramos to Presidente de Cuetzalan, Tzicuilan 12 March 1923. Libro de Actas de 1923, entry for 6 March 1923. For the first petition from Cuetzalan to open federal schools see Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, pp. 210-213.

bay. Thus, the Revolution in Cuetzalan was a question of non-Indian middle-range ranchers and merchants fighting the more established elite. For the Nahua peasants of San Miguel Tzinacapan the revolution brought the encroachment of outsiders upon its council and abusive attacks from Vega Bernal whom they perceived as a rich *koyotl* (non-Indian), one more in the line of men who came to replace 'Pala' Agustín Dieguillo.<sup>115</sup> Migueleños joined the revolution, supporting Barrios, simply to defend themselves.

As regards public instruction, the revolution not only brought heightened factionalism that affected schools but, more importantly, through war and legislation, destroyed the tax system that had sustained them for almost a century.

The 1930s witnessed the first signs of trends that would dominate the rest of the twentieth century in Cuetzalan. The vast project of road building carried out by Gabriel Barrios in the 1920s heralded greater political and economic penetration. The state government began to consider the tourist potential of Cuetzalan as early as 1929.<sup>116</sup> In the same year Gabriel Barrios had to leave the Sierra as a result of new governor Almazán's plan to dismantle his *cacicazgo*. The Flores faction of Cuetzalan was deprived of a useful ally and municipal administration finally broke open to new families. In 1934, municipal president Tobías Cárcamo's petition to expropriate the building that had been occupied for the Catholic school in order to establish the municipal school was an indication that new groups had gained access to office. Perhaps a sign that support for the

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<sup>115</sup> 'Pala' is the Nahua version of Francisco. Interview with Miguel Félix, San Miguel Tzinacapan 20 November 2001. Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan', p. 205.

<sup>116</sup> AMC, box 187, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 55. Relativo a la solicitud que varios vecinos de esta cabecera hicieron para que sean cambiados los nombres de las calles de la Av. Iturbide por Av. Miguel Alvarado Avila', Cuetzalan April-May 1929. Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, p. 132.

Church continued to be strong, the dispute between the descendant of the priest José María Gutiérrez and the council was not solved in favour of the local authorities until 1942, a year after the municipal boys' school was near ruin and had to close down.

In 1935, the authorities, who were already affiliated to the revolutionary party (PNR), successfully promoted the reconciliation between Luis Huidobro and Salvador Vega Bernal 'inviting all Cuetzaltecos, whether politicians or voters, without distinction of class to unite in a single front under the protection of the PNR'.<sup>117</sup> Mirroring the situation across the country, there were signs that a more inclusive hegemony than that of the 1877 pact might emerge. And yet, harmony eluded Cuetzalan in the tumultuous 1930s.

The second half of the decade witnessed political conflict with federal teachers as well as *cristero* unrest coming from groups in the eastern part of the Sierra (Teziutlán). As recounted by Mary K. Vaughan, in 1937 Faustino Hernández, a former student of one of Cuetzalan's private schools and a graduate of the revolutionary training college at Xochiapulco, arrived in San Miguel Tzinacapan to open a federal school only to be kidnapped by *cristero* rebels. Nonetheless, Hernández's flexibility, sincere concern for local needs and opposition to the *cacicazgo* at the headtown, eventually gained him the trust of the community, dramatically represented in a ritual ceremony where the *pasados* handed him the rod of justice.<sup>118</sup> The presence of Hernández was the first strong link between federal government and San Miguel Tzinacapan, precisely after the

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<sup>117</sup> Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, pp. 137-138.

<sup>118</sup> Mary K. Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution*, pp. 134-136. On Faustino Hernández as a pupil in Cuetzalan, see AMC, box 188, Presidencia, Programa de las fiestas del 15 y 16 de septiembre, Cuetzalan Sep 1929.

armed revolution had increased encroachment on Nahua autonomy and unleashed a crisis in Indian forms of government. It is therefore no surprise that it took Hernández a lot of good will and effort to be accepted in the community. Tzinacapan made it clear that Nahua custom still mattered and Hernández had to accept it as such. As happened in other states in central Mexico (such as Tlaxcala and Estado de México), Tzinacapan's alliance with the federal teacher not only bypassed but was opposed by municipal authorities. It is perhaps for this reason that the mixed primary school at the headtown did not become federal until 1946; the municipal council would have feared the interference of teachers upon whose appointment they had no influence on. When the council finally petitioned the *Secretaría de Educación Pública* (SEP) to take over their primary school, the federal teachers in the region asked the council to give teacher Faustino Hernández the honorary title of 'favourite son of Cuetzalan', in recognition of his outstanding contribution to education in the municipality. With this request, the SEP's local representatives sought to ensure the council's loyalty to federal teachers in spite of past political conflict. Yet the council, in turn, pushed forward its own view of education, naming the federal school after José María Gutiérrez, the Porfirian priest who had trained so many of Cuetzalan's teachers.<sup>119</sup> If in the civic festival speeches of the Porfiriato Hispanic hero Don Pelayo shared a place of honour with liberal patriot Benito Juárez, in post-revolutionary Cuetzalan the contribution to education of priest Gutiérrez and revolutionary Hernández were both commended.

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<sup>119</sup> Emma Gutiérrez, *Cuetzalan 1861-1968*, pp. 210-213.

## Chapter Six

### Huehuetla During The Revolution

This chapter first analyses Huehuetla's response to the new agrarian legislation, the abolition of head taxes and the state government's intervention in local councils, and then examines, in turn, how these responses shaped education after 1911. The first part describes the alliances between Indian caciques and the non-Indian elite for the purposes of land transactions and in order to run the local government. It is argued that the autonomy of the Totonac caciques decreased as they lost power to the dominant non-Indian faction, yet their role was still crucial because they harnessed the support of the majority Totonac population in order to run the council and sustain schools. Indian caciques saw municipal schools, sustained by head taxes, as a key feature of good government, whatever the educational results. The second part outlines how, with a simple change of name, the nineteenth-century school head tax (Chicontepec) persisted after its official abolition because local societies were capable of organising themselves to raise their own funds, overcoming the fact that the taxes municipalities could levy had been reduced, and that the state and federal governments failed to provide an alternative tax system to fund education. Finally, in terms of the education provided by schools, an analysis of classroom practice and teachers' ideas in Huehuetla, and elsewhere in the district of Zacatlán, shows an important shift in ideas. The language question that had been ignored by nineteenth-century liberals came to the fore at the hand of the emergent *indigenismo*. Teachers began to discuss how to teach Spanish to their Indian pupils, with the purpose of integrating them into the nation. At the same time, talk of the specificity of Indian education

was enveloped at best in the paternalist rhetoric of *indigenismo* and at worst in plainly racist tones.

## I. Land, Taxes and the Totonac Authorities' Dilemma

Politics in 1910s Huehuetla were to a great extent shaped by the land question. However, the revolution in Huehuetla was not a case of landless peasants rising against landowners who abused *desamortización*. In fact, it was the land-grabbing cacique, Federico González, who rebelled after he found resistance from former occupiers of communal lands and was additionally ostracised by the authorities, including the non-Indian community. González died in the early 1910s and the Huehuetla council, like many others throughout the Sierra, supported the Constitutionalists, providing them with cash and supplies. In contrast to Cuetzalan, factionalism in Huehuetla did not focus on different revolutionary factions. Instead, the clearest split emerged between landless Totonacs on one hand, and a group of Indians and non-Indians who subdivided and sold the former commons, on the other. The landless Totonacs petitioned the federal and state agrarian commissions to no effect, while others engaged in land transactions pre-empting agrarian reform.

Although the land question in Huehuetla suggests class allegiance was more important than ethnic identity, during a political crisis provoked by the state executive's intervention in the *Ayuntamiento* in 1925, the 'hidden transcript' of Totonac political identity became public. The very same Totonac caciques who had previously allied with non-Indians in the administration, as well as for the purposes of land transactions, organised an Indian-only plebiscite to elect authorities to the town council. This brought to light the existence of a political identity rooted in a specifically Indian contribution to good government, based on



the provision of unpaid services and the payment of head taxes to run the administration and provide for education. However, unacknowledged by the state government, the Indian plebiscite came to little and new elections were organised. After 1925 Totonacs continued to participate in the Huehuetla council but could not stop their losing power to mestizos.

Through the study of the political crisis in 1925 Huehuetla and two similar crises in 1912 and 1925 Caxhuacan, this section argues that the Totonac caciques' power was waning in the face of the increasingly dominant mestizos, yet non-Indians still had to reckon with the Totonacs if they wanted villagers to pay their taxes and give their *faenas*. The Totonac authorities' dilemma lay in the fact that they were crucial mediators between the majority Indian population and the non-Indian elite. If they leaned towards the Indian side of the equation, it soon became clear that they were too weak to exclude non-Indians. If they leaned too much towards the non-Indian side or made excessive demands on villagers, they risked being perceived as exploitative caciques, thus losing the support of the Totonacs, the very support they needed in order to be useful to the dominant mestizos. Notably, the fact that at least some of these Totonac leaders were bilingual and literate did not help them break the logic of mestizo domination.

### The Rebel Cacique and Revolutionary Violence

Since the 1890s, Federico González had manipulated the implementation of *desamortización* to his own and his brothers' advantage. Although several others benefited from the sales too, the González brothers' land grabbing was greater and the number of their potential rivals grew among both the propertied and the

landless. The former sought to curb the González brothers' ambitions, which threatened to erode the authorities' legitimacy, while the latter showed a dogged resistance to losing the land they had cultivated 'from time immemorial'. By the end of the 1900s some of the land the caciques saw as theirs was still occupied by Totonac beneficiaries of the former communal property. The municipal presidents of 1905-1911, although only half-heartedly listening to the Totonac peasants' protests, refused to recognise as valid the González brothers' land titles.<sup>1</sup>

Lacking support from the council which he had once headed, Federico González raised up in arms in March 1911, storming the Huehuetla council. The existing municipal president, Onofre Ortuño, left but González did not manage to occupy the council. An interim president, called Gabino Mora, and allied with the deposed authorities, took over. Seeking only to turn the tide in his favour in Huehuetla, González did not even bother taking sides in the revolutionary conflict that had emerged throughout the country. In June the *jefe político* in Zacatlán and the state government headed by the moderate Maderista Rafael Cañete took a stance on the events in Huehuetla, returning to the council the authorities that González had forcefully ousted.

Having failed to depose his rivals, who were backed by Zacatlán and Puebla City from June 1911, Federico González's insurrection did not have very good prospects. The rebellious landowner dedicated the following months to seeking allies, possibly offering land to potential supporters, and in October 1911, he tried to focus opposition to the authorities around the proposal to sustain a band. In 1900 when Federico González had been the council's treasurer and his ally, Rosauero Castro, was municipal president, they had sponsored a philharmonic

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter Three, Section I.

corps. As in all village bands throughout the Sierra, the band members in Huehuetla enjoyed some privileges but were unpaid, and the music director's salary was paid with the population's contributions. The band had served González and Castro to serenade a *jefe político* who approved of their dubious implementation of disentailment policy and recognised the land titles the caciques gave themselves. Yet the band members were not entirely dependent on the authorities, and the musicians could, in any case and according to their contracts, leave the band after five years of service and be replaced by new players. When in 1905 a faction opposed to González and Castro was elected to the council, the band nonetheless continued its work. In 1910 new band members took over and gave their first performance in the centennial Independence celebrations.<sup>2</sup> However, shortly after Federico González rebelled in March 1911, and in a context of general disorder, the Huehuetla council, temporarily headed by Gabino Mora, decided to suspend the work of the philharmonic corps. When the bandmaster demanded back pay, the council explained there was no cooperation from the population to sustain the band.<sup>3</sup>

In October 1911 a group of around 90 men, possibly including the band members, and headed by Federico González and Camilo Juárez, complained of the sudden interruption of the philharmonic corps' rehearsals and performances. The protesters argued that the players' five-year contract to serve in the band had been running for only one year. Their letter of complaint was not only a defence of the philharmonic corps but a denouncement of the authorities. They voiced deep criticism of the council, reminding them that it was their duty to serve those

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<sup>2</sup> See Chapter Four, Section I 'Playing the Tune of Citizenship'.

<sup>3</sup> AMH, box 39, Presidencia, 'Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento de 1911', entries for 31 March and 25 Sep 1911.

who paid the contributions to sustain local government and satisfy public needs. '[...] If the Ayuntamiento is in charge of overseeing the pueblo's interests and it is within its faculties to open and close establishments for instruction, why does it suppress the music corps without considering the will of the pueblo?'.<sup>4</sup> If protesters were using a rhetoric of democracy, questioning the legitimacy of the authorities as representatives of the general will, the response from Guadalupe Rivera, the provisional municipal president, drew on a modern, liberal concept of citizenship to criticise the conditions under which the philharmonic corps was funded and members participated.

Non-Indian Guadalupe Rivera reminded Federico González, Camilo Juárez, and the many Totonac petitioners that not everyone in Huehuetla wanted to contribute to funding the band. Indeed, according to Rivera, practically all Huehuetecos, including some of the protesters, had stopped paying. It was disingenuous of the petitioners to claim that they represented the population. As for their suggestion that it was possible to collect the contributions if only the authorities showed the political will to do so, the president reminded them that until then the fees collected had been more forced than voluntary. Moreover, Rivera argued that the contributions should have been approved by the state government rather than unilaterally by local authorities.<sup>5</sup> The municipal president's claim that there was an element of coercion to both the funding of and participation in the philharmonic corps was to some extent true.<sup>6</sup> The line between voluntary and compulsory contributions to pueblo government was very fine.

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<sup>4</sup> AMH, box 37, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 50. Referente al ocurso presentado por Mateo García y socios sobre la supresión de las clases musicales', Huehuetla 25 Oct and 7 Nov 1911.

<sup>5</sup> AMH, box 39, Presidencia, 'Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento de 1911', entry for 30 Oct 1911.

When the majority Totonac population found the authorities legitimate, they contributed if not enthusiastically, at least voluntarily. It was when they were dissatisfied with those in power that they complained against the high demands of pueblo government (service in the cargo system, *faenas*, multiple taxes and pecuniary contributions). Only then would they invoke liberal principles and constitutional articles against unwanted services. In 1913 the authorities in fact managed to gather enough support to reorganise the band, which continued working, albeit with interruptions, throughout the 1910s.<sup>7</sup> Beyond the 1911 episode of the philharmonic corps, in years to come, the disruption of local government brought about by the revolution, rather than any articulate programme for a new social contract, resulted in increasing resistance to taxes and contributions. For some of the population this was perhaps a welcome opportunity, for others it was merely the inevitable response to revolutionary plundering and violence.

Although González and his allies ultimately failed to reinstate the band and to depose the *Ayuntamiento*, the latter was in a weak position. When the higher authorities realised that the Huehuetla council was ravaged by factionalism, they intervened. The December local elections were annulled, and contrary to the state government's expectations those programmed for February 1912 did not take place.<sup>8</sup> González died shortly after his rebellion and the opposition he had harnessed against Huehuetla's authorities, apparently waned. The dominant group in Huehuetla, now headed by Gabino Mora, followed the Sierra caciques (Juan

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<sup>6</sup> See Chapter Four, Section I.

<sup>7</sup> See Section II in this chapter.

Francisco Lucas and his successor Gabriel Barrios) in joining the Constitutionalists. Although Huehuetla backed the dominant and ultimately triumphant faction, it would not be spared the disruption and violence of the revolution. In the following years the political situation went from bad to worse.

By the mid-1910s Huehuetecos were hard-pressed to contribute cash and food to the Constitutionalist cause. Factionalism became violent, men broke out of jail, some died of gunshots in the middle of the street, houses were plundered and women raped. Municipal treasuries were bankrupt with populations unable or unwilling to pay taxes, with towns falling prey to plundering by revolutionaries of all factions.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, Huehuetla suffered from the Constitutionalists' intervention in local affairs, reluctantly following instructions for purges in the council. Finally, the fine line between revolutionary action and banditry was frequently crossed with revolutionaries committing abuses and bandits claiming allegiance to the Constitutionalists. Confusion facilitated wrong-doing and bred distrust. Constitutionalist Lieutenant Ricardo Galicia entered the town to fight bandits roaming the area but insulted the authorities and ransacked the treasury, thus gaining little moral authority in the eyes of the Huehuetecos. And yet, amidst fighting and the constant struggle to consolidate and expand support, the Constitutionalists retained the upper hand.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> AMH, box 39, Presidencia, Jefe Político to Presidente Municipal de Huehuetla, Zacatlán 11 June 1912; Cumplido to Jefatura Política, Huehuetla 2 July 1912; M. Espinosa to Zacatlán, Huehuetla 30 Oct 1912; Zacatlán to Huehuetla 31 Oct 1912.

<sup>9</sup> AMH, box 48, Tesorería, 'Estado de Corte de caja que manifiesta los ingresos y egresos habidos en esta oficina', Caxhuacan 30 June 1914.

<sup>10</sup> AMH, box 30, Presidencia, Coronel D. Pineda to Huehuetla, Olinla 15 Jan 1915; Subcomandante Gabino Mora to C. D. Pineda, Huehuetla 17 Jan 1915; C. D. Pineda to Huehuetla, Tepango 19 and 20 Jan 1915; Manuel J. Vázquez to Subcomandante Gabino Mora, Huehuetla 22

If abusive Constitutionlists had little moral authority before ordinary *serranos*, the reputation of their opponents, the Conventionists, was no better.<sup>11</sup> In alliance with Juan Francisco Lucas, Huehuetla concerted its response to the Conventionist challenge but could not avoid their plundering.<sup>12</sup> On 11 February 1917 Zapatista forces stormed Huehuetla with 100 cavalry, led by Adampol Gaviño, looting the market. As the demand for \$1000 could not be met by the municipal funds, they took the treasurer Enrique Becerra and tax collector Prudencio Lobato hostage and left Huehuetla, re-entering on 21 March with a 140-strong force. By June they controlled a good part of the area around Huehuetla, preventing communication with Zacatlán. In August Gaviño continued putting pressure on Huehuetla until he obtained \$500 cash. Having made this payment to the Conventionist enemy, the municipal president of Huehuetla had to justify his actions to the *Brigada Serrana* in Tetela and to reiterate Huehuetla's support for the Constitutionlists even though he had continued to provide supplies to the 1200-strong force of the Constitutionlists at Hueytlalpan, now commanded by Gabriel Barrios, who had just taken over from Juan Francisco Lucas after the old patriarch's death. In a time of violence and abuses by forces from all sides, it was the weakness of civilian authorities and a basic survival

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Jan 1915 and 'Exp. no. 2. Seguridad Pública. Relativo a partes sobre novedades' 4 May, 30 June, 3 and 19 July 1915.

<sup>11</sup> In 1915 the provisional Conventionist governor, Esteban Márquez, contacted Huehuetla but obtained no response. AMH, box 30, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 6. Seguridad Pública. Relativo a un decreto expedido por el Gobernador sobre seguridad. Año de 1915', Letters from Gobernador Provisional General de Brigada Esteban Márquez, Huauchinango 22 Feb and 8 March 1915. On Esteban Márquez's reputation for frequent abuses and opportunism see Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*, pp. 289, 294-298.

<sup>12</sup> AMH, box 40, Presidencia, 'Linea Telefónica Municipal', message from Xochiapulco, 31 Dec 1916.

instinct, Huehuetla's municipal president explained, that forced them to obey the enemy.<sup>13</sup>

The forces under Adampol Gaviño plundered Huehuetla at least once more in July 1918, this time accompanied by rebel Salvador Vega Bernal from Cuetzalan.<sup>14</sup> The report sent by the municipal president of Huehuetla to Gabriel Barrios regarding the behaviour of the revolutionaries mirrors the abuses of Vega Bernal that appear in Cuetzalan's oral histories. The troops demanded food and \$1000 in silver coins; attacks against private property included the looting of shops and homes, taking anything from horses and cattle to money and blankets, abusing women and burning homes.<sup>15</sup> The extent of abuse may be magnified by oral tradition and it might have been exaggerated by the Huehuetla authorities in trying to justify their having submitted to the enemy, or in seeking greater protection from Gabriel Barrios.<sup>16</sup> There is, however, no doubt that violence had reached Huehuetla, disrupting the running of administration and everyday life.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> AMH, box 40, Presidencia, Presidente to Puebla, Huehuetla 30 June 1917; box 43, Presidencia, Presidente Municipal to *Jefe de Armas de Tetela*, Huehuetla 13 Feb 1917; Olintla to Huehuetla, 14 Feb 1917; Huehuetla to Olintla 14 Feb 1917; Huehuetla to Tetela 20 Feb 1917; Presidente Municipal to General Adampol Gaviño and Coronel Coutigno, Huehuetla 20 Aug 1917 and box 48, Presidencia, Presidente Municipal to *Jefe de la Brigada Serrana en Tetela*, Huehuetla 25 March 1917; Brigada Gaviño to Huehuetla, Zaragoza 8 Aug 1917; Bardoniano Barrios to Presidente Huehuetla, Olintla 31 Aug 1917 and Presidente to *Jefe de la Brigada Serrana in Tetela de Ocampo*, Huehuetla 29 Dec 1917.

<sup>14</sup> See Chapter Five, Section I.

<sup>15</sup> AMH, box 40, Presidencia, Presidente Municipal to Gabriel Barrios, 20 July 1918.

<sup>16</sup> On exaggeration of abuses see Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution*, vol. II, p. 176. On the very different versions of Villista plundering in Namiquipa see Ana Maria Alonso, *Thread of Blood. Colonialism, Revolution and Gender on Mexico's Northern Frontier* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995), pp. 3-7.

<sup>17</sup> For signs of factionalism in 1917-1918 see AMH, box 40, Presidencia, 'Reglamento de policía', Huehuetla 15 Dec 1916; 'Acta Gubernativa', Huehuetla 15 Jan 1917 and AGAP, file 11494, box 1, docs. 227-229, Huehuetla 8 Feb 1940.



Instability continued in 1920 with the Vega Brigade provoking unrest in Caxhuacan and nearby Jonotla and Iztepec. Yet by August 1920 the worst of the violence seems to have receded. The forces accountable to Barrios, under the orders of a Totonac Captain named Antonio García, provoked no complaints from the population or authorities and spent most of their time tilling the fields.<sup>18</sup> The fields themselves, however, were very much disputed.

### Pre-empting Agrarian Reform: Class Differences and Inter-Ethnic Alliances

As seen in Chapter Three, the 1890s was the decade of *desamortización* in Huehuetla. Non-Indian authorities and council employees, from the municipal president and aldermen to the judge, the secretaries and some teachers, benefited most. With the connivance of the *jefatura política* in Zacatlán they surveyed the lands in each other's petitions before approving the sales. Among them Federico González, who was secretary after 1896 and municipal president after 1897, and his brother Santiago, stood out for abusing their positions of authority and making the most of their connections with Governor Mucio Martínez to accumulate land.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> AMH, box 60, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 3. Relativo a los partes de novedades', Huehuetla 23 Sep 1920; 'Exp. no. 1. Relativo a datos pedidos por el Coronel D. Gabriel Barrios, sobre la situación actual de los pueblos y la conducta observada por las compañías de tropas pertenecientes a la Brigada Serrana', Huehuetla 5 Aug 1920.

<sup>19</sup> Former commons that had been acquired by the González brothers, abusing *desamortización* laws, included the ranches of Mujuyum, Tehuancate, Las Fajas and Cuhuec. AMH, box 13, Presidencia, Libro de Actas del año de 1896, entries for 11 May, 30 Sep and 12 Oct 1896; box 20, Tesorería, Padrón de censatarios por rezagos, Huehuetla 1 Jan 1903; box 73, Presidencia, 'Informe que rinde el Ayuntamiento de Huehuetla al Secretario General de Gobierno del Estado sobre mejoras materiales y asuntos de más importancia durante 1933-1936', Huehuetla 15 Dec 1936.

The ambitions of the González had been contained by opposition from Indian and non-Indian authorities since the mid-1900s. But the caciques had already amassed sufficient land to cause conflict. Given the accumulation of private land by caciques, it seemed that Huehuetla, if not Conventionists because of the regional caciques' alliance with Constitutionalists, would embrace agrarian reform. But diverging interests complicated matters.

When news of the plans for land re-distribution reached Huehuetecos in 1915, many sought to pre-empt agrarian reform.<sup>20</sup> Local notables who had benefited moderately from Porfirian *desamortización* or who were landless merchants and traders (such as 1910-1911 and 1915-1916 municipal president Onofre Ortuño) were hoping to benefit from the subdivision of the González brothers' land. Therefore, they wanted to keep control over any distribution. If the agrarian law was to be implemented to the letter they stood either to lose land, or in some cases to keep their modest properties but miss the opportunity to gain more. Under the circumstances it is no surprise that those who stood to lose property hastened to sell their land before state agrarian commissions or the federal *Departamento Agrario* arrived to survey their properties and give them away to the landless.<sup>21</sup>

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AGAP, file 11494, box 1, doc. 15 to 23, Copias de los documentos de adjudicación de Santiago González, presentadas por su hijo Gonzalo González, various dates.

<sup>20</sup> AMH, box 30, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 8. Relativo a llamados que hace la superioridad a empleados de esta municipalidad', Tetela de Ocampo to Huehuetla 13 Feb 1915.

<sup>21</sup> In Pisaflores (Sierra Alta de Hidalgo) at least one estate owner started to sell portions of his land for fear of agrarian reform in the 1920s, even though he was a personal friend of the state governor. In Huejutla (Huasteca de Hidalgo) the landowners' sales during the revolution were probably a strategy to avoid expropriation too. Frans J. Schryer, *The Rancheros of Pisaflores. The History of a Peasant Bourgeoisie in Twentieth-Century Mexico* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), p. 82. Frans J. Schryer, *Ethnicity and Class Conflict in Rural Mexico*, p. 120.

Indians and non-Indians in Huehuetla followed three strategies to secure land. One option was to petition the *Ayuntamiento* to purchase plots from the common lands the council managed to recover (effectively following a process of disentailment). With such subdivision, the Huehuetla council sought to appease the landless at the same time that they prevented intervention from agrarian authorities in Puebla or Mexico City.<sup>22</sup> Yet this was a very limited reform that only benefited a few. A greater number engaged in private transactions, purchasing plots from landowners who sought to pre-empt agrarian reform. And an even greater number, of lesser means, would start in March 1916 a long series of petitions to the agrarian commission in Puebla.

Let us examine in this respect the *Ayuntamiento*'s subdivision of a portion of Las Fajas. Las Fajas were two estates lying each side of a road and measuring 174 hectares, which had been acquired by Federico González. On 23 February 1916, the Huehuetla council headed by Onofre Ortuño denounced Federico González for misappropriating land under the pretext of disentailment during the Porfiriato. According to the council, the most flagrant case was that of Las Fajas, which had been reserved by the *Ayuntamiento* of 1895 to distribute among poor landless families. Huehuetla asked the state government for support to recover the land and permission to distribute it among the landless. But the state executive merely forwarded the petition to Puebla's agrarian commission, which apparently failed to respond. The council managed to recover a portion of Las Fajas and simply decided to go ahead with the subdivision. By December 1915 the *Ayuntamiento* had measured two sections of the estates in question. With a perimeter of 692 and 609 metres each, they were available for distribution. A

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<sup>22</sup> After the 1916 repartition of land from Las Fajas, the council distributed further plots from Las

swarm of petitions from Totonac and mestizo men and women descended on Huehuetla's authorities. Among the rejected petitions were those of Camilo Juárez, who had been associated with Federico González in the band petition of 1911 and would be a key figure in the private land transactions of subsequent years; of Braulio Baños, a schoolteacher and secretary who had benefited from Porfirian disentailment and of the Moras, who were the children of one of the first non-Indian families to settle in Huehuetla and became landowners, local politicians, administrators and teachers.<sup>23</sup>

The twenty-five beneficiaries of the council's distribution of land received small plots of twenty-five by twenty-five metres, were exempted from taxation on the first ten years of possession and for the following ten years they would be charged an annual fee of 6 per cent of the property's value, as it was done under *desamortización*. Most of the plots went to Totonacs including those who had built their homes three years before as a result of González's sales, possibly some who cultivated the land as tenants, and others who had no property titles or tenancy contracts but nonetheless occupied land that González claimed as his own.<sup>24</sup>

The council seemed to have stood by its populist rhetoric in this land distribution. Yet twenty-five beneficiaries were a slim support base and subsequent actions did not endear the authorities to the landless. Significantly,

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Fajas and the 123-hectares Cacalucut.

<sup>23</sup> AMH, box 37, Presidencia, Applications dated Nov and Dec 1915, see especially Manuel Gaona to Subcomandante Militar, Huehuetla 10 Nov 1915, Juan Cruz to Subcomandante Militar, Huehuetla 20 Nov 1915 and José María Juárez to Subcomandante Militar, Huehuetla 29 Nov 1915; Presidente Municipal Onofre Ortuño to Secretario General del Departamento Ejecutivo del Estado, Huehuetla 29 Dec 1915. Interview with Margot Aparicio Mora, Huehuetla 11 July 2003.

when Onofre Ortuño addressed the state government to denounce González's appropriation of Las Fajas, he failed to mention the other properties of Federico and Santiago González. Indeed, the relationship between the local authorities of 1915-1916 and this family of large landowners was not antagonistic. It was public knowledge that Ortuño rented land from Santiago González and was a friend of Esteban González. The latter, who was brother in law of the daughter and heir of Federico, Catalina González, had received a grant from the 1916 redistribution of Las Fajas. Surely in the eyes of landless Huehuetecos, a grant to Esteban González added insult to injury.<sup>25</sup>

While the Huehuetla council distributed a few minimal land grants, only sufficient for building a home and orchard, others sought greater change. On 26 March 1916, eight days after the distribution of land from Las Fajas, the agrarian discourse spreading throughout the country was reproduced in Huehuetla in the first letter in a long correspondence between a group of landless Totonacs and the agrarian commission in Puebla. It was signed by six Indian men, who represented a group of a hundred Totonacs. In their land petition, former secretary and municipal president Federico González became a cruel cacique of the Old Regime supported by the execrable Mucio Martínez.<sup>26</sup>

Taking into account the fact that we now have a government that is deeply concerned to dictate legislation to improve the low moral and material condition in which the indigenous class has lived for a long time, [...] we want to bring to your attention the fact that the benefits of the Revolution have not been enjoyed in this town.

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<sup>24</sup> AMH, box 37, Presidencia, Libro de acuerdos del Ayuntamiento Constitucional de este Municipio Libre, entries for 31 Dec 1915, 11 and 18 March, 3 April, 19 May, 13 July 1916.

<sup>25</sup> AGAP, file 11494, doc. 10, Huehuetla 19 April 1916.

<sup>26</sup> For further evidence of Martínez as a despotic and corrupt governor in the collective memory, see María del Pilar Cuevas, *Historia de la educación elemental en Zacatlán, 1880-1900* (Licenciatura thesis, BUAP, 2000), p. 63.

Unfortunately for Huehuetla, as well as other towns in this Sierra, we have been subjugated for many years to the caciques Federico, Santiago and Gregorio González who enjoyed the support of the execrable Mucio Martínez. During all this time we were humiliated, having to work without retribution of any sort, whether they exploited us through tax collections or committing myriad abuses that would be too lengthy to enumerate. But the most infamous act of these caciques was the dispossession of land which we suffered, forcing many of our country fellows to emigrate and others to submit to an abject and hopeless life, devoid of aspirations. It was the cacique Santiago González who carried out the most ruthless land-grabbing. In the estates of Quequetzonuculut, Mogjuyum, Tehuancate, Cajanín and La Fábrica [...] of which we were dispossessed under the pretext of Adjudication Laws [...] it is still possible to see the remains of the houses and huts where honest and happy families lived [...].<sup>27</sup>

By April the Totonac petitioners complained that Ortuño found excuses to postpone land surveying and distribution, and exposed the municipal president's interests and connections with the González and their allies. The latter were threatening the petitioners with violence if they continued corresponding with the agrarian commission in Puebla City.<sup>28</sup>

Between 1917 and 1929 the council failed to name a local agrarian commission as requested by Puebla and agrarian reform stood at a standstill. In 1918, according to authorities, the agrarian discontents assassinated the secretary, the scribe and the treasurer.<sup>29</sup> For its part, the agrarian commission in Puebla made no more than a feeble and failed attempt to send a surveyor in 1924 while no federal officials visited the municipality. The chaotic situation of Puebla state politics in the 1920s and possibly the Huehuetla authorities' connections with the governors who headed the executive in this turbulent decade, in conjunction with

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<sup>27</sup> AGAP, file 11494, doc.4-5, Huehuetla 26 March 1916.

<sup>28</sup> AGAP, file 11494, doc.10, Huehuetla 19 April 1916.

<sup>29</sup> At least one of the men assassinated was Totonac. AGAP, file 11494, docs. 227-229, Huehuetla 8 Feb 1940.

the less than enthusiastic federal attitude to agrarian policy at the time, favoured those who did not want reform.

During the 1930s, landowners, merchants, municipal authorities and public employees including teachers, on one hand, and the petitioners of 1916, on the other, formed their own agrarian committees and sought recognition from the agrarian authorities in Puebla. After various attempts by the two rival groups, in 1935 an agrarian committee composed of landowners, merchants and local notables, including a few Totonacs, was finally appointed and officially recognised.<sup>30</sup> Yet in the following year the rival faction obtained recognition for its committee. It represented the landless who were behind the 1916 agrarian petition, and allegedly included those who had participated in the 1918 assassination of council employees. The rest of the decade saw a continuous dispute between the two different committees, each trying to gain exclusive recognition from Puebla or Mexico City. Visits from representatives of the agrarian bureaucracy did little to clarify matters in the 1930s.<sup>31</sup> In 1940 the federal agrarian department finally surveyed the land to be distributed. However, evidence suggests that at least some of the landowners who had to give up their properties managed to retain them, and Huehuetla, like the cases studied by Frans

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<sup>30</sup> For an agrarian committee of a similar composition in Hidalgo see Frans J. Schryer, *The Rancheros of Piasflores*, pp. 15-18. Throughout the 1930s members of Huehuetla's committee included: Camilo Juárez, Rosendo Cruz (a landowner who had been municipal president in 1926), teachers and secretaries Leopoldo López Ruanova and Braulio Baños.

<sup>31</sup> AGAP, file 11494, box 1, doc. 34-41, Puebla 3 Dec 1924; leg 49, Puebla 24 May 1929; doc. 59, Comité Particular Ejecutivo Agrario, Huehuetla 30 Dec 1931; doc. 134-136, Celula Agraria Unión Campesinos, Huehuetla 20 Dec 1935; doc. 154, Comité Ejecutivo Agrario, Huehuetla 22 Feb 1938; doc. 171, Oficial Mayor de Gobierno to Presidente de la Comisión Agraria Mixta, Puebla 14 June 1938; doc. 176-194, Correspondence between Comisión Agraria Mixta, Inspector Jose Sánchez Carrasco and Huehuetla, July-Aug 1938; doc. 227-229, Comité Ejecutivo Agrario, Huehuetla 8 Feb 1940.

Shcryer in Huejutla (Hidalgo), had a fictitious ejido, that is, one that only existed on paper in order to pretend, before the relevant authorities, that agrarian reform had taken place.<sup>32</sup> But what interests us here are the alliances formed during the land transactions of the 1920s.

While agrarian reform was kept at bay in the 1920s, many engaged in private land transactions. Camilo Juárez and Miguel Márquez, who were literate and bilingual, were key leaders in this process. Miguel Márquez was a Totonac cacique who fenced an estate of 75 hectares during his term as municipal president in 1920. Evidence for Camilo Juárez suggests he was a hispanicised Totonac or a bilingual mestizo who, in any case, had the ability to mediate between Indian and non-Indian worlds, as well as between opposing factions for the purpose of land transactions.<sup>33</sup> Throughout the 1920s landowners, especially the González, were selling the former municipal commons they had acquired in the Porfiriato while Juárez and Márquez acted as representatives of prominent but illiterate Totonac buyers, and as purchasers themselves.<sup>34</sup> Juárez and Márquez also formed political associations with the most prominent mestizos including those who occupied political office in 1920-1940 as well as mestizos and Totonacs who bought land from the González.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Frans J. Schryer, *Ethnicity and Class Conflict*, pp. 134-139. For Huehuetla see Javotte Chomel, *La question agraire au Mexique : un des enjeux principaux de l'histoire du pays* (BA thesis, Université Pierre Mendès France, Grenoble II, 2002).

<sup>33</sup> See Totonac support for Camilo Juárez in Caxhuacan: AMH, box 52, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 8. Relativo a las fuerzas regionales y de destacamento. Año 1923', Huehuetla 25 July 1923.

<sup>34</sup> AMH, box 32, Tesorería, Padrón de Censatarios, Huehuetla 1 Jan 1904 and box 56, Fomento, 'Exp. no. 23. Relativo al avalúo del predio del Tehuancate de la propiedad de los señores Camilo Juárez y socios', Huehuetla 26 Sep to 5 Dec 1923 and box 59, Tesorería, Notario Público to Tesorero de Huehuetla, Zacatlán 22 June 1922.

<sup>35</sup> AMH, box 56, Presidencia, 'Libro de registro de agrupaciones políticas. Año 1923', Huehuetla 12 May 1923



Although land transactions in the 1920s suggest accommodation could be reached between wealthy Totonacs and the González, there were nonetheless political tensions between them. This included the successful ousting of *juez menor* Modesto González (brother of Federico and Santiago) by a tumult of Indian men, headed by Totonac Manuel Pérez, who had purchased land from Esteban González.<sup>36</sup>

We have so far considered the council's subdivision of the communal land which they managed to recover, the 1916 Totonac petition to the agrarian commission and the private land transactions of the 1920s. Let us now look at the case of the *rancho* of Mujuyum, around 100 hectares of former communal where coffee was grown. This case shows the intervention of Demetrio Barrios, brother of the regional cacique Gabriel, in the land transactions that pre-empted agrarian reform. The Mujuyum was first adjudicated to Santiago González in 1896, during his brother Federico's term as secretary, and in 1903 it was registered as property of Federico.<sup>37</sup> But some of the Totonacs who occupied the land before adjudication had refused to vacate it and remained in constant dispute with González. The case was complicated by a property dispute between Federico González and Demetrio Barrios. In 1916, at the same time the *Ayuntamiento* was distributing land from La Fajas, Barrios managed to fraction and sell a section of the Mujuyum to Totonac and mestizo peasants.

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<sup>36</sup> Donato Rivera replaced him as provisional judge. In March 1924 the post was offered to Gabino Mora, who rejected it because he was already working as teacher in Xunalpu. Finally Rosendo Cruz became judge. AMH, box 63, Justicia, 'Exp. no. 3 Relativo a la toma de posesión de los jueces del municipio', Huehuetla 3 Jan and 5 March 1924.

<sup>37</sup> AMH, box 13, Presidencia, Libro de Actas del año de 1896, entries for 30 Sep and 12 Oct 1896; box 20, Tesorería, Padrón de censatarios por rezagos, Huehuetla 1 Jan 1903. AGAP, file 11494,

However, in 1921 the González tried to regain control of the Mujuyum and those who had not been favoured by Barrios' sales took their chances and rented from the González. The tenants were 'a group of indígenas' which included Miguel Márquez and were represented by Camilo Juárez, non-Indian Gabino Mora and Totonacs Cristóbal Dorantes and Pedro Juárez.<sup>38</sup> The contract envisaged the eventual purchase of the Mujuyum by its tenants and denied this right to those who had bought plots from Demetrio Barrios in 1916. Unfortunately, we do not know whether the 1921 contract took effect or who was in possession of the land during the 1920s. What is clear is that the ownership of the Mujuyum remained contested and further contracts were signed and property titles issued. By August 1929, Camilo Juárez, in association with several Totonac men, signed yet another sale contract for the disputed estate, this time with Demetrio Barrios as the owner.<sup>39</sup> Juárez and his associates had possibly failed to occupy the land after the 1921 contract with González so they tried buying from Barrios instead.<sup>40</sup> When the federal agrarian department finally investigated the situation in 1940, the men who had purchased from Barrios were in possession of the land. Although his

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box 1, docs. 15 to 23, Copias de los documentos de adjudicación de Santiago González, presentadas por su hijo Gonzalo González, various dates.

<sup>38</sup> To Camilo Juárez, land transactions were obviously more important than political considerations: for the 1921 contract he allied with Gabino Mora, whom he had criticised for the suspension of the band in 1911.

<sup>39</sup> AMH, box 73, Presidencia, Presidente Ignacio Pérez to Agente Subalterno del Ministerio Público, Huehuetla 22 April 1936.

<sup>40</sup> The transaction contradicted the state judicial authorities' 1929 ruling that Catalina González, daughter and heir to Federico, not Demetrio Barrios, had property rights over the Mujuyum. This was most likely part of the state government's efforts to destroy the Barrios' *cacicazgo* in the Sierra but Demetrio Barrios managed to complete the transaction and his purchasers were not affected.

distribution of land was considered illegal, the engineer sent by the agrarian department recommended that the occupants' interests be respected.<sup>41</sup>

Between 1916 and 1940 a handful of landowners who had benefited from Porfirian disentailment, or simply misappropriated land, sold part of their properties.<sup>42</sup> By 1940 many more had benefited from the land transactions of the previous two decades.<sup>43</sup> Among the beneficiaries of the 1916-1940 land transactions were several enterprising non-Indians who had arrived in Huehuetla later than the Porfirian landowners. They established commercial houses and coffee processing plants in the municipality and occupied the municipal presidency. Some also joined the 'elite' agrarian committee that competed with the committee of the landless. Camilo Juárez, Miguel Márquez, and their Totonac allies had also benefited from Huehuetla's private land transactions.<sup>44</sup> Other politically active men, such as David Becerra and Gabino Mora, prosperous merchants and more modest proprietors of commercial houses and shops, probably benefited from the 1916-1940 land transactions. According to the 1940 report by the federal agrarian commission, none of them possessed more than 50

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<sup>41</sup> AGAP, file 11494, box 1, doc. 268-274, Informe de los trabajos en Huehuetla del perito agrario Ing. Francisco J. Gracia, México, D.F. 1 June 1940.

<sup>42</sup> Among them were Rosaura Castro, Miguel Espinosa, the González and the heirs of Ramón Mora (Ramón Mora was a brother of Gabino).

<sup>43</sup> See Appendix Six, Table 1. 'Properties of the biggest landowners in the headtown of Huehuetla, 1920-1940'.

<sup>44</sup> AMH, box 59, Tesorería, Padrón de fincas rústicas sujetas al pago del impuesto municipal de 4 al millar, Huehuetla 1920. Alberto Becerril, *Andanzas de don Luis Salinas*. AGAP, file 11494, box 2, Correspondence between the committee headed by Ismael Rivera and Puebla, Gobernador Maximino Avila Camacho to Jefe del Departamento Agrario, Puebla 17 April 1940.

hectares and were therefore exempt from expropriation. But they might have in fact possessed more land and found strategies to disguise their total properties.<sup>45</sup>

These men had good reasons to oppose the González yet they had no interest in agrarian reform. The land sales by the bigger landowners who had benefited most from disentailment were essentially a conservative reaction to the threat of agrarian reform. Yet the transactions redressed to some extent the abuses of Federico González and his brothers and resulted in the distribution of land among a greater number of people than during the privatisation of commons from 1890s onwards. It was also a practice that fitted Gabriel and Demetrios Barrios' liberal ethos of the self-made man and aversion to agrarian politics, so it is no surprise to find Demetrio involved in the land sales that sought to pre-empt agrarian reform. That many Indians engaged in such transactions, and disputes emerged over who benefited rather than over the privatisation of commons itself, shows Totonacs in Huehuetla, like Nahuas in the colder, southern part of the Sierra had no ancient attachment to communal property per se, as has generally been argued, but used whichever strategy was available and best suited them in order to secure access to land.<sup>46</sup> Recent work on Totonac and non-Indian *rancheros* in Papantla (Veracruz) further demonstrates that while some Indians resisted privatisations others actively engaged in the transactions. As Schryer has found for Huejutla (Huasteca de Hidalgo), in Huehuetla class differences account

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<sup>45</sup> For such strategies in Huehuetla, including including arrangements with friends and relatives who lent their names as purchasers, see Javotte Chomel, *La question agraire au Mexique*, pp. 62-65, 93-95

<sup>46</sup> For an interesting reflection on how these assumptions have pervaded the agrarian historiography see Emilio Kouri, 'Interpreting the Expropriation of Indian Pueblo Lands in Porfirian Mexico: The Unexamined Legacies of Andrés Molina Enríquez', *HAHR*, 82:1 (2002), pp. 69-117.

for land politics better than ethnic groups: both wealthy Indian leaders and mestizo strongmen had an interest in forestalling agrarian reform.<sup>47</sup> Those who had sufficient economic means, as well as a bilingual and literate mediator like Camilo Juárez at hand, engaged in sales and purchases while those without economic resources and possibly less able mediators petitioned the agrarian bureaucracy.<sup>48</sup>

This preference for private land transactions additionally fulfilled a political function. When the Huehuetla council sought to distribute some of the land misappropriated by González, they were asserting the municipal government's right to decide over former communal land, avoiding interference from Puebla or Mexico City. When the Barrios brothers engaged in land transactions that preempted agrarian reform, they were trying to prevent the formation of agrarian commissions which would be independent from their control and have a direct connection with the federal government. Indeed, having a direct link with the higher authorities, independent agrarian committees threatened the power of both municipal authorities and the regional caciques.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> For the southern, Nahua Sierra see Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*. For Papantla see Emilio Kourí, *The Business of Land: Agrarian Tenure and Enterprise in Papantla, Mexico, 1800-1910* (PhD thesis, Harvard University, 1996), ch. 6, especially pp. 311-319. For Huejutla see Frans J. Schryer, *Ethnicity and Class Conflict*, p. 135.

<sup>48</sup> Schryer provides further evidence that the presence of literate leaders facilitated successful agrarian reform in mestizo El Garabato while the absence of bilingual literate men hindered the process in the Nahua hamlet of Piedra Ancha. Frans J. Schryer, *The Rancheros of Pisasflores*, pp. 114-117, 121-122.

## The Erosion of Totonac Autonomy

The association between mestizos and Totonacs in the formation of political factions and in the land transactions that took place after 1916, did not prevent an attempt in 1925 on the part of former allies of the mestizos to have an all-Totonac council elected by Indian voters exclusively. This episode will be considered below as it provides insight into the inter-ethnic agreements to govern Huehuetla and to sustain schools through the population's contributions.

One month after the *Ayuntamiento* elections of December 1924, non-Indian Daniel Bonilla took office at the head of an entirely Totonac council including Miguel García Pantaleón and Pedro Juárez. Both Daniel Bonilla and Pedro Juárez had been beneficiaries of the land transactions of the previous decade. However, in February, as has been seen for Cuetzalan, the new state government headed by Claudio N. Tirado attempted to depose councils that had been supportive of Barrios, including Huehuetla's. The Tirado-imposed council, unlike that of Cuetzalan, contained no outsiders; it was formed by Indian and non-Indian Huehuetecos but they were unpopular. Possibly feeling threatened by the majority of the population, who disapproved of the state intervention, towards the end of February the council members abandoned their posts without giving notice. The state intervention had upset a precarious balance of inter-ethnic alliances and government. There is no sign that Daniel Bonilla, the municipal president elected in December 1924, tried to return. Instead, the illegitimate state intervention,

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<sup>49</sup> Mauricio Merino, *Gobierno local, poder nacional*, ch. 5. Luis Aboites, *Excepciones y privilegios*, pp. 80-81 and 227-259. Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, pp. 122-128, 151-153.

followed by the withdrawal of the imposed authorities, prompted the organisation of a plebiscite by Totonac men to appoint new authorities.<sup>50</sup>

Miguel Márquez, Cristóbal Simón, Cristóbal Dorantes, José Márquez, Salvador Núñez and José Núñez, in their own names and in that of the indigenous peoples (*pueblo indígena*) of Huehuetla, who made up 'ninety per cent of the resident citizens (*ciudadanos vecinos*) of the municipality', pleaded with Luis Sánchez, *Agente Subalterno del Ministerio Público*, to witness a plebiscite to elect a new council and thus resume the administration of the municipality, which had been entirely suspended for ten days, after the state-imposed president and aldermen abandoned their duties.<sup>51</sup> Following the legal procedure which required the presence of the *Agente*, Luis Sánchez agreed to oversee the plebiscite.<sup>52</sup> The Huehuetla judge Rosendo Cruz, the auxiliary president of Caxhuacan and the municipal employees who were in town, including all six teachers, witnessed the takeover of the new council. The *Agente* and all the witnesses were non-Indian.<sup>53</sup> It is all the more remarkable that, among the leaders who represented the Totonac

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<sup>50</sup> AMH, box 62, Presidencia, 'Documentos sobre las elecciones del Ayuntamiento para regidores propietarios y suplentes de 14 de Diciembre 1924 que funcionarán el año 1925', Autoridades electas, Huehuetla 18 Dec 1924; box 63, Presidencia, 'Exp. 16. Relativo a la designación de la Junta Municipal Provisional de este municipio por el ejecutivo del estado. Año de 1925'; 'Exp. Correspondencia del mes de marzo', Huehuetla 4 March 1925; box 64, 'Exp. no. 29. Relativo al informe del componente de los personales que forman la Junta Auxiliar de Caxhuacan y Corporación Municipal', April 1925.

<sup>51</sup> AMH, box 55, Presidencia, Toma de protesta de las autoridades elegidas en el plebiscito, Huehuetla March 1925.

<sup>52</sup> *Ley Orgánica Municipal sancionada el 1 de octubre de 1923* (Puebla: Escuela de Artes y Oficios del Estado), cap. X, art. 55.

<sup>53</sup> Signatures of witnesses included: tesorero municipal E. M. Lobato, juez menor y correccional Rosendo Cruz, presidente auxiliar de Caxhuacan Ernesto Luna, director de la escuela Xunalpu Gabino Mora, directora de la escuela de Chilococho Carmen Varela, director de la escuela Benito

population before the *Agente*, and among those who were elected in the plebiscite, were men who had been allies of non-Indian notables in land transactions and the formation of political associations, as well as men who had occupied office in inter-ethnic councils including the one headed by Daniel Bonilla and deposed by the state intervention in February.<sup>54</sup> It was these same men who called for a plebiscite in which 500 Totonacs voted for an all-Indian council. The justifications outlined for the plebiscite revealed an otherwise suppressed discourse of Indian citizenship:

III. Considering that the different departments of the administration such as the civil register, the municipal treasury, schools, police, etc. can under no circumstance be left without vigilance and that it is of the utmost necessity to immediately appoint authorities to take charge of these offices;

IV. Considering that it is urgent to appoint a municipal council, which will establish order through its police and other means conferred to the authorities by law in order to suppress the daily scandals that we now suffer and to maintain public order;

V. Considering that the council appointed by the state government is unpopular, it is necessary to appoint a new council that responds to the people's will and will therefore be able to continue collecting the monthly donation of 50 cents per person to sustain education in the municipality, which has been paid by each indigenous person for the last ten years;

VI. Considering that only under an authority that is legitimate in the eyes of the indigenous inhabitants of the municipality, will the repair of roads and other public works be completed efficiently and efficaciously;

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Juárez Rafael Sánchez, directora de la escuela Miguel Hidalgo Amada Mora, and director de la escuela de Cinco de Mayo José María Arroyo.

<sup>54</sup> The authorities elected 'unanimously' in the 1925 plebiscite were Miguel Pantaleón García, José Nuñez, Antonio García, Pedro Juárez, José Márquez, Cristobal Dorantes and Manuel Santiago. Pantaleón García and Pedro Juárez had been members in the Daniel Bonilla council deposed by the state government. Cristobal Dorantes and Pedro Juárez had signed tenancy/purchase contracts with the González.



VII Considering that indigenous peoples, who are the only to contribute with donations, *faenas* and a number of services such as couriers, will see their guarantees ignored by the current authorities who are enemies of the people, they kindly plead that a plebiscite take place so that they may continue contributing to address the utmost needs of their pueblo. And

VIII. Considering that their petition is just and reasonable, the signatories ask that the Agente del Ministerio Público witness the plebiscite and that this is communicated to the state governor.<sup>55</sup>

The document bears twenty-seven Totonac signatures. The signatories were possibly the only indigenous men in the municipality, excluding perhaps some of those who might have remained in alliance with the mestizos, who could sign their names. They represented the voice of an Indian identity that claimed a specific history with a special contribution to good government. Moreover, they believed non-Indians did not contribute as much to the community and in some cases also trampled on the Totonacs' guarantees. Their claim for rights, including the right to an Indian-only plebiscite and government, was rooted in the particularly demanding form of citizenship exercised by Indian pueblos through the payment of taxes and numerous contributions and the provision of *faenas*. Significantly, although all sections of the administration were considered as important, the only pecuniary contribution mentioned was that of education which, together with *faenas* and various services traditionally provided free by Indians, made up a demanding set of duties in which mestizos did not share. The accusation that mestizos avoided participation was partly rhetoric and partly truth. According to municipal documentation non-Indians did pay contributions such as the school fees as well as commerce and property taxes (the latter are not mentioned in the Totonac document) and had paid head taxes, including Chicontepec, during the

Porfiriato. Non-Indians could have falsified records but if they had entirely avoided contributions, given the experience in Huehuetla and elsewhere in the Sierra in previous decades, the Totonacs would surely have protested before.<sup>56</sup> Insofar as Creole-mestizos and Indians paid the same taxes, the nineteenth-century system departed from colonial practice. Yet Totonacs in Huehuetla still found that their contribution to good government was greater, was their assessment accurate?

Evidence suggests that the Totonacs, at least the Totonac caciques, enjoyed a less unequal relationship with mestizos than is suggested by the justification for the 1925 plebiscite. Although non-Indians had increased their hold over the administration since the 1890s, Totonac caciques in the 1920s were still sharing government with them. Miguel Márquez, promoter of the plebiscite, had been municipal president in 1920, engaged in the numerous land transactions of 1916-1940 and acquired an estate matching those of the most ambitious non-Indians. Literate and enterprising leaders, like Márquez or Camilo Juárez, mediated between elite mestizos and the Indian population. As council members Márquez and many other Totonacs were in charge of negotiating and collecting any contributions from the Totonac population while non-Indian aldermen sought contributions from their own.<sup>57</sup> There is no evidence to suggest that non-Indians avoided pecuniary contributions. However, it is likely that in *faenas* they only worked as supervisors rather than labourers or paid somebody to work for them as

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<sup>55</sup> AMH, box 55, Presidencia, Presidente Municipal to Secretario General del Gobierno del Estado, Huehuetla 4 March 1925 and Acta del Plebiscito que tuvo lugar en Huehuetla, 4 March 1925.

<sup>56</sup> See Chapter Three for the vociferous complaints and petitions for redress by the people of Caxhuacan against personal services imposed on Indians by mestizos and Chapter One for the protests by the Totonac caciques of Huehuetla against illegal clerical fees in the late nineteenth century.

was the case elsewhere in the Sierra.<sup>58</sup> Additionally, services supplied by *topiles* and other offices of the cargo system were only provided by Totonacs. Therefore, even if the plebiscite justifications somewhat magnified the Indian efforts by obscuring non-Indians' contributions, there were good reasons for the Totonac to feel that their input was greater. For their part, non-Indians probably felt that their contributions to public good through commerce and its taxes as well as government were as important, or perhaps even greater since they fashioned themselves as civilisers of the Indian.<sup>59</sup>

Predictably, in the Totonac leaders' account of 'Indian citizenship', class differences were ignored. Did Totonac caciques like Márquez actually perform any manual work in *faenas* or did they merely supervise them or pay for others to do them like wealthy non-Indians would have done? And was the contribution of poor mestizos, who probably worked like any Indian for the *faenas*, any less valuable? Neither did the Indian caciques reflect on the fact that a flat rate of 50 cents to sustain schools was more exacting for the poorer. Yet the Totonacs' best argument and one that the organisers of the plebiscite did not miss was clearly that of numbers. Even if non-Indians paid taxes and supervised *faenas* for public works, were the Totonac majority to withdraw their support, the municipal treasury would be bankrupt, no funds would exist to pay teachers and roads would not be built. Ultimately, through the plebiscite, the Totonac caciques who had seen their power on the wane since the Porfiriato, were reminding non-Indians that the Indian population's support was indispensable, that their own role as

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<sup>57</sup> See, for instance, AMH, box 37, Presidencia, Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento Constitucional de este Municipio Libre, entries for 11 and 14 Oct 1916.

<sup>58</sup> Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, pp. 136-139.

mediators was still crucial, and that they would be unable to persuade the majority to cooperate if unpopular men should take office.

As it happened, the Totonac-only government came to little. The state government, predictably, did not recognise it. The moment of the Totonac citizen self-consciousness was once more subsumed into complex factional politics, surrendering to the logic of mestizo domination that had begun in the Sierra in the nineteenth century, aided by the Indians' overall lack of linguistic and administrative skills, and accelerated in the twentieth aided by the Revolution. The episode, nonetheless, may have served as a reminder to non-Indians that Totonac support was crucial and had to be cultivated.

Less than two months after the plebiscite, the state government intervened to appoint a municipal council headed by Francisco Ramírez.<sup>60</sup> Ramírez was probably a Totonac but not one of the separatist leaders. In July he reported to Puebla that a few agitators were trying with some success to persuade the population to stop paying the contributions that had sustained the municipality's schools since 1916. Most likely, these were the leaders who had organised the Totonac plebiscite, reminding the imposed authorities that they were not of their choosing.<sup>61</sup>

The following year, non-Indian Rosendo Cruz took over as president. Originally from Tetela, he had moved to Huehuetla and benefited from

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<sup>59</sup> On non-Indians self-identity as civilisers of the Indian see Chapter Three, Section II and Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, pp. 55-56.

<sup>60</sup> AMH, box 63, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 16 Relativo a la designación de la Junta Municipal Provisional de este municipio por el ejecutivo del estado', Huehuetla 1925 and box 64, Presidencia, 'Exp. 29 Relativo al informe del componente de los personales que forman la Junta Auxiliar de Caxhuacan y Corporación Municipal', 26 April 1925.

disentailment during the Porfiriato. He was later justice of the peace in Chilocoyo and by the 1920s had become a prominent landowner and trader in Huehuetla. No Totonac surnames reappear in the list of municipal presidents over the subsequent decade. However, Totonacs did participate as members of the council. Notably, Miguel Márquez, who had called for the March plebiscite, nonetheless joined the council headed by Rosendo Cruz. The difficulty of the position of such Totonac caciques is further revealed by the 1926 council's decisions to fund the construction of Huehuetla's new market. The population would provide *faenas* to carry materials to the building site and make a one-off contribution of 50 cents per adult man. The way in which the pecuniary contribution was decided, as registered in the council minutes, also reveals how local practices were shaped by legislation but often departed from it. In this case, president Rosendo Cruz proposed the organisation of the contribution, while Miguel Márquez reminded the council that for the contribution to be legal they would need to seek approval from the state government and pay the federal fee.

In 1925 it had been more convenient for Márquez to emphasize the customary practice by which Totonacs contributed to the public good more than non-Indians. This time it was useful to side with the legal precepts. As the Totonac member of the council, Márquez was probably trying to delay or even avoid requesting the Indian population for yet another fee in addition to the *faenas*. However, Márquez found no support for his view. The other members of the council argued that the construction for the market, which had been started the previous year, needed completion before the rainy season commenced and this would not be achieved if the legal steps were followed. Instead of following the

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<sup>61</sup> AGEF-SEP-MPE, box 60, file 60.7 'Junta Directiva de Educación Pública. Correspondencia con

spirit and letter of the law, one of the aldermen said, it was reasonable to make an honest and practical decision. The contribution would be collected without state approval. Although the council took the 'fast track', the inauguration of the market did not take place until 8 September, well into the rainy season, and was the occasion for a small fiesta with a speech from local intellectual Leopoldo López Ruanova.<sup>62</sup>

### The 'Staunch Defenders of the Old Regime' Will Not Leave

The political turmoil experienced in the subject pueblo of Caxhuacan in 1912 and 1925 provides further evidence that the Totonac caciques' position, although still important, was relatively weak and on the wane. Using revolutionary rhetoric, and taking advantage of the political turmoil at the time, the Totonac population of Caxhuacan protested both against non-Indian caciques and their Indian allies. For their part, the Totonac caciques separated from the non-Indians and sought, but failed, to be elected to the local council. Although bilingual and literate, these Indian caciques had no power on their own and eventually had to re-establish their alliances with the dominant non-Indians.

On 31 July 1911 a group of disaffected residents of Caxhuacan represented by Juan Juárez petitioned Puebla to replace the authorities, which they described as 'enemies of the triumphant revolution' who had been recently imposed 'against

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Huehuetla', Francisco Ramírez to Secretario General, Huehuetla 10 July 1925.

<sup>62</sup> Other funds invested in the construction of Huehuetla's new market included payments by tenants in the commons of Esperanza y Acalcoat and fees (*censos*) collected from the beneficiaries of the distribution of plots from Las Fajas. AMH, box 59, Presidencia, Libro de Actas del año de 1926, entries for 3 March, 20 April and 1 Sep 1926.

the residents' will'.<sup>63</sup> A further petition to remove the authorities was sent on 6 January 1912. It pointed to election irregularities and it included a blacklist of the Caxhuacan's caciques whom the petitioners sought to ban from office. Under the heading 'Staunch defenders of the Old Regime who must not take office in this pueblo', the list included the names of the most influential non-Indian families of Caxhuacan: the Párragas, who, as seen in Chapter Three, had provoked tension by demanding personal services from Totonacs during the Porfiriato; the Castañedas, including current auxiliary president Ambrosio Castañeda, and the Navas, including Juan Nava, recently elected auxiliary president. The list additionally included the names of several Totonac caciques.

Thus the Juan Juárez faction considered the Totonac caciques to be the same as the non-Indian, all undesirable exploiters. Yet, in 1912, these same Totonac caciques criticised non-Indian authorities with whom they had been allied in the past.<sup>64</sup> In the 1912 local elections, instead of allying with the non-Indians, they grouped under the name of *Club Popular Indígena Benito Juárez* to put forward an all-Totonac list of candidates. After underscoring the convenience of appointing candidates who were able to speak and write Spanish, they chose ten Totonac men, of whom at least three could speak Spanish. Among the candidates and their supporters, all Totonac, 15 out of 68 could sign their names.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> AMH, box 38, Presidencia, 'Exp. Relativo a nombramientos de la Junta Auxiliar de Caxhuacan y demás documentos referentes al mismo asunto', 6, 13, 30 January and 1 Feb 1912; box 39, Presidencia, 'Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento 1911', entry for 8 Sep 1911.

<sup>64</sup> The *Club Popular*'s candidates for auxiliary president, deputy president and *juez* (Diego Luna Vázquez, Manuel Jacobo and Manuel Hernández) had all been listed as undesirable caciques by the Juan Juárez faction.

<sup>65</sup> AMH, box 45, Presidencia, Formento, 'Exp. no. 29. Relativo a la lista nominal de las personas residentes en esta municipalidad que hablan el idioma castellano', Huehuetla 26 Dec 1910.

The Totonac candidates of the *Club Popular* were not successful in the elections. On 1 February 1912 an entirely non-Indian council was elected in spite of the Juan Juárez faction's complaints of irregularities and intimidation during the elections. Yet, on 20 April the council of non-Indian caciques resigned, probably after threats from their rivals. This time they did not have the support of the Totonac caciques of the *Club Popular* who had taken their own path. Manuel Hernández, who had been proposed as *juez* by the *Club Popular*, but was blacklisted by the Juan Juárez faction, took over as auxiliary president in 1912. However, by 1913 non-Indian cacique Romulo Párraga had taken office.<sup>66</sup> Thereafter, the municipal presidency was occupied by the Párragas, the Castañedas and their mostly non-Indian allies.<sup>67</sup>

Thus the Totonac caciques of the *Club Popular* had tried to take a separate path from the non-Indians, only to lose any chance of taking office. Like the Totonac caciques of Huehuetla in 1925, those of Caxhuacan in 1912, proved too weak to act on their own. Mestizos had exercised a firm hold over Caxhuacan's administration since the Porfiriato and enjoyed the backing of the Huehuetla authorities. By contrast, the Totonac caciques, although headed by bilingual and literate men, had no support from higher authorities and were seen by the Totonac population (possibly a majority) as abusive caciques just like the Castañedas, the Párragas or the Navas.

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<sup>66</sup> AMH, box 38, Presidencia, 'Exp. Relativo a nombramientos de la Junta Auxiliar de Caxhuacan y demás documentos referentes al mismo asunto', Frumencio Castañeda to Presidente Huehuetla, Caxhuacan 13 Feb 1912 and Juan N. Nava to Presidente Municipal, Caxhuacan 20 April 1912, Manuel Hernández to Presidente Huehuetla, Caxhuacan 20 July 1912.

<sup>67</sup> AMH, box 37, Presidencia, 'Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento Constitucional de este Municipio Libre. Diciembre 1915 a diciembre 1916', entry for 18 Dec 1915; box 40, Tesorería,



It is in this context that acts of symbolic defiance by the population towards unwanted authorities and teachers are best understood. An incident in 1913, related by teacher Frumencio Castañeda, will serve as example. Frumencio Castañeda had been secretary and teacher in Caxhuacan in previous years and was also involved in local politics. His brother Ambrosio Castañeda had been auxiliary president in 1911 and Frumencio himself was alderman in the 1912 council which had to resign. In 1913, when Rómulo Párraga became auxiliary president, Frumencio Castañeda was appointed as teacher. During a temporary absence of the auxiliary president in September 1913, an incident occurred. Two Totonac men, Pedro Sarmiento and Juan Fernando, entered the school building interrupting the lesson imparted by Frumencio Castañeda. The men claimed they wanted to sit down and join the children in their lesson. Castañeda reprimanded them and asked them to leave, to which the two men replied insisting they wanted to learn to read. With words that the teacher identified as common among Totonacs, Sarmiento and Juan Fernando threatened Castañeda: '*ilan, nac taxtuyan pero na uc xilao*', which the teacher translated as 'we are leaving now but this is not the end'. This might have been no more than a playful provocation by the discontented faction of Caxhuacan but it is no coincidence that the two men defied Castañeda by entering the school room and demanding to be taught to read Spanish. As we saw above, the Totonac leaders of the *Club Popular Indígena Benito Juárez* recognised the importance of bilingualism and literacy. Whether Sarmiento and Juan Fernando supported the *Club* or the Juan Juárez faction, they must have been well aware of the advantages of language and literacy skills. Even if the defiant Indians were not serious about their intentions in the classroom, and chose to bid farewell to

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'Estados de Corte de Caja de Caxhuacan', year 1916; Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 9. Tomas de protesta',

Castañeda in Totonac, perhaps with the intention of making their words more threatening, their act was a protest against the monopoly over both Spanish literacy and office by very few men.<sup>68</sup>

Further proof of disaffection shone through Frumencio Castañeda's complaints. When writing to the alderman for education in Huehuetla, Castañeda remarked he had to keep the windows closed, to the detriment of ventilation, because similar interruptions occurred with some frequency. Additionally, *semaneros* failed to call children to school in the morning and to open the doors so that the teachers could check the time in the tower clock. The complaint reveals at once the use of the free services of the cargo system for the running of the school as well as confirming the office holders' disobedience. As in Huehuetla, the population was using the well-known strategies of foot dragging, non-compliance and the occasional threat to remind the authorities and those close to them of their disaffection.<sup>69</sup> Nevertheless, the non-Indian caciques continued occupying office and in 1917 Frumencio Castañeda himself became auxiliary president.

By the 1920s Diego Luna Vázquez and a few other Totonac men, having realised they could do little by themselves, had chosen to ally with the non-Indian elite. However, in 1925, as a result of the discontent and disorder provoked by Claudio Tirado's intervention in municipal councils, a rival group, probably the Juan Juárez faction, took office, apparently by force of arms. On 14 February 1925 an alliance of the most prominent non-Indians and their Totonac allies

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Huehuetla 1 Oct 1917 and 'Exp. no. 8', Caxhuacan, March-June 1917.

<sup>68</sup> AMH, box 43, Instrucción Pública, Escuela elemental de niños Melchor Ocampo, Frumencio Castañeda to Regidor, Caxhuacan 18 Sep 1913. For Castañeda's trajectory see also the two footnotes immediately above.

<sup>69</sup> On such strategies of resistance see James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak. Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), chs. 2 and 7.

complained that the new council of Caxhuacan was 'seeking revenge' by imposing onerous contributions and jailing those who did not pay them. That those complaining chose to describe their rival's actions as 'revenge' suggests their own actions when in office were similar. The protesters sought redress on the basis of article 6 of the Constitution, which prohibited head taxes; the same head taxes (even if renamed as contributions) which they had collected while they were in office. They further accused the new council of drunkenness while they portrayed themselves as dutiful taxpayers who were up to date with federal contributions and property taxes.<sup>70</sup> Later the same year, two public employees were accused of persecuting one of the Navas but they were never charged.<sup>71</sup>

Although the new faction had managed to occupy the council, reversing the domination of the Caxhuacan caciques, the latter used an old strategy to recover control of local government: the non-Indian teacher and the secretary became their allies. In April 1925, mirroring frequent complaints against secretary-teachers in the Porfiriato, teacher Filogonio Domínguez and secretary Carlos Méndez were accused of controlling the politics of the pueblo,

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<sup>70</sup> AGEP-SEP-MPE, box 60, file 60.7 'Junta Directiva de Educación Pública. Correspondencia con Huehuetla', Telegram from Caxhuacan via Zacapoaxtla to Puebla, 14 Feb 1925. AMH, box 55, Presidencia, 'Exp. 13. Relativo a la toma de posesión de la junta auxiliar de Caxhuacan', Caxhuacan 1 Feb 1925.

<sup>71</sup> AMH, box 55, Presidencia, Seguridad Pública, 'Exp. no. 15. Relativo a las garantías solicitadas por Julián Nava ante el ejecutivo del estado', Puebla to Huehuetla, 17 Nov 1925; box 60, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 28. Relativo al nombramiento de Secretario de la Junta Auxiliar de Caxhuacan', Caxhuacan 16 May 1925; Justicia, 'Exp. no. 1. Diligencias practicadas con motivo de los atropellos y persecuciones de que se queja D. Julian Nava de esta vecindad', Caxhuacan, 26 and 30 Nov 1925.

overstepping authorities and interfering in elections so that only men who were willing to submit to their will were chosen.<sup>72</sup>

Thus the disruption caused by the state government's intervention in local councils in 1925 had unwittingly provided an opportunity to vent grievances and seek redress. In Huehuetla, the 'hidden transcript' of the Totonac caciques was made public.<sup>73</sup> In Caxhuacan, a new faction who resented the Indian and non-Indian cacicazgo had taken power at least for one term. The dominant caciques, however, did not surrender power. But beyond the strictly political conflicts, the case of Caxhuacan in 1925 additionally alerts us to the situation in schools. Those who resisted the old cacicazgo resorted to complaints, which included protests against teacher Filomeno Domínguez and point to serious deficiencies in Caxhuacan's school.

The 1925 complaint against the secretary's and the teacher's intervention in the politics of Caxhuacan also dealt with Filogonio Domínguez's inadequacy as a teacher. He was accused of immoral behaviour as a frequent drinker who gave a bad example to his own children, playing cards with them and letting them use improper language. He often abandoned and sometimes even closed the school, whether it was to teach a few songs to the schoolchildren in Huehuetla, repair his home or attend to his work as a carpenter. Furthermore, for the school's examinations he arranged a sympathetic jury to ensure that they kept quiet about

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<sup>72</sup> Domínguez had occupied a number of posts in Caxhuacan. He was alderman. in 1915, justice of the peace in 1917 and became teacher in mid-1920 when he replaced Frumencio Castañeda. AMH, box 37, Presidencia, 'Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento Constitucional de este Municipio Libre. Diciembre 1915 a diciembre 1916', entry for 18 Dec 1915; box 40, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 9. Tomas de protesta', Huehuetla 1 Oct 1917.

<sup>73</sup> James C. Scott, *Domination and the arts of resistance*.

the low level of the education he imparted.<sup>74</sup> After these complaints, Domínguez left his post, but briefly returned in 1926. Perhaps having failed to exert as much power as he intended, by 1927 he was a teacher at Chilocoyo and later in Huehuetla.

The accusations against Domínguez point to the teachers' ineptitude and disinterest for their job and their greater concern with village politics, suggesting that schools were no more than instruments of the literate groups within the dominant village elite. However, the efforts made by the Indian and non-Indian authorities as well as the population, in order to sustain schools not only during peace time but amidst the Revolution's conflicts and economic crisis, warns us against coming to such conclusions. In order to adequately assess the specific role played by schools in the community, let us now turn to the second part of this chapter.

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<sup>74</sup> AGEP-SEP-MPE, box 60, file 60.7 'Junta Directiva de Educación Pública. Correspondencia con Huehuetla', Presidente de la JDEP to Inspector, Puebla 30 April 1925.

## II. Schools for Totonac Children

Sustaining schools in rural communities with a limited demand for literacy may seem foolish. Amidst violence, agrarian tension and with authorities often failing to attract the cooperation of villagers to run the local administration, public instruction may seem an unattainable goal, or at best a project for better times. However, the 1925 Totonac caciques' inclusion of education as one of the aspects of good government, and their contention that it was the Indian population who sustained the schools through their head taxes, warns against any belief that schools were merely a means for literate non-Indians to earn a salary at the expense of the population, or a luxury to be indulged in more prosperous times. Among other things, schools, like village bands, could be politically useful. As will be seen below (briefly for the village band and in detail for the schools) they acted as a focus to reconstruct alliances and recompose the fabric of society.

In October 1911, when Federico González and Camilo Juárez petitioned to reinstate Huehuetla's band, the municipal president, Guadalupe Rivera, turned them down because the population was unwilling to contribute to its maintenance. Yet, by August 1913 Huehuetla's music director Leopoldo Santos was instructing a number of boys in order to form a municipal band. That the collection of contributions was not entirely voluntary, as Rivera argued against the band supporters in 1911, is further suggested by the 1913 list of 'donors' that included practically all men of taxpaying age.<sup>75</sup> To try to persuade the population to sustain a band was an ambitious effort for any council, all more so at a time of heavy

exactions and violent plundering from friend and foe. But a municipal band could reap benefits. In times of turmoil and exacerbated factionalism, the philharmonic corps could help harness political support at home and be used to show allegiance to the Constitutionals.

In 1915, a *Junta Directiva de la Banda de Música* was appointed in order to organise the collection of contributions to pay a bandmaster and to supervise his work. The Totonac members of the *Junta* agreed to collect a monthly fee of 20 cents from each resident to pay the band's expenses including a generous salary of \$100 for its director.<sup>76</sup> Both Indian and non-Indian members of the *Junta* would contribute special donations to purchase instruments and sheet music.<sup>77</sup> The efforts of the *Junta* and the population were not in vain. At a time of Constitutionalist purges it was useful to demonstrate support for the dominant revolutionary faction in the Sierra. Hence, the Huehuetla band played in the 1915 Independence celebrations at the Constitutionalist's headquarters in Tetela. In the spring of 1916 the Huehuetla philharmonic corps serenaded Constitutionalist General Antonio Medina, who was pleased with Huehuetla's efforts to conduct government in difficult times.<sup>78</sup>

However, achievements could vanish in times of war. In 1917 Zapatista foraging depleted resources: they even took some musical instruments. The

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<sup>75</sup> AMH, box 45, Tesorería, 'Padrón de los vecinos de esta cabecera que voluntariamente contribuyen para el sostenimiento de una banda militar', Huehuetla 1 April 1913.

<sup>76</sup> Compare with the \$60 earned by the schoolmaster in 1917 (see Appendix Six, Table 2 for teachers' salaries). AMH, box 37, 'Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento Constitucional de este Municipio Libre. Diciembre 1915 a diciembre 1916', entries for 18 Dec 1915, 8 Jan 1916

<sup>77</sup> AMH, box 37, 'Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento Constitucional de este Municipio Libre. Diciembre 1915 a diciembre 1916', entries for 18 Dec 1915, 8 Jan 1916; box 42, Tesorería, 'Comprobantes de data de la Banda Municipal', 15 Sep 1915, Years 1916 and 1917.

Huehuetla council decided to fire the bandmaster, Vicente Macín, due to the population's 'justified' refusal to sustain the band.<sup>79</sup> A new band would not be formed until 1922.<sup>80</sup>

### The Struggle to Fund Schooling

The ups and downs of the Huehuetla band, the role of Totonac authorities in exacting pecuniary contributions from the majority Indian population, and the usefulness of the band to focus on reconstruction and demonstrate a town's achievements were all replicated in public instruction. During the early 1910s, the Huehuetla council managed to maintain a semblance of order and schools continued working despite Federico González's uprising and the subsequent political turmoil. The tasks faced were similar to those of the Porfiriato: the organisation of civic festivals, the construction and repair of schoolbuildings, the purchase or expropriation of existing buildings, dealing with complaints against inefficient teachers, and the collection of fines for absenteeism.<sup>81</sup> The breakdown

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<sup>78</sup> AMH, box 37, 'Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento Constitucional de este Municipio Libre. Diciembre 1915 a diciembre 1916', entries for 24 April and 8 May 1916.

<sup>79</sup> Macín would later direct the Brigada Serrana's band, see AMZ, Year 1920, Presidencia, 'Exp. 27. Relativo a Festividades Cívicas', Programa para la conmemoración del CX aniversario de nuestra Independencia Nacional, Zacatlán 14 Sep 1920. AMH, box 40, Presidencia, Vicente Macín to Presidente, Huehuetla 3 Oct 1917; box 51, Presidencia, Huehuetla to Teniente Coronel Gabriel Barrios in Tetela, Huehuetla 17 Nov 1917.

<sup>80</sup> AMH, box 65, Fomento, 'Exp. 26. Relativo a la banda municipal de esta cabecera', Coxquihui 20 Dec 1922.

<sup>81</sup> AMH, box 39, Presidencia, 'Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento de 1911', entries for 4 July, 5 Aug, 9, 23 Oct, 27 Nov; box 50, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. 16. Relativo a multas impuestas por la jefatura a los padres de los niños que no asisten a las escuelas', Huehuetla, year 1912; box 37, 'Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento Constitucional de este Municipio Libre. Diciembre 1915 a diciembre 1916', entries for 15 and 22 January 1916.



of order, however, heralded problems for the schools. There were already signs that tax collection would become increasingly difficult.<sup>82</sup> At various points in the 1910s the authorities decided to close schools due to lack of funds, or teachers simply resigned because the payment of salaries was delayed. Yet Constitutional leaders in the region, such as Lieutenant Colonel Dolores Pineda and General Antonio Medina in 1915-1916, and Gabriel Barrios in 1919, ordered the opening of schools and encouraged measures to collect funds and increase registration and attendance.<sup>83</sup>

In 1916 after an exhortation to parents and more frequent visits of council members to schools, registration went up to 59 boys and 48 girls. However, the economic crisis unleashed by the revolution would soon affect schools. Hard-pressed by the high rise in the price of basic goods, public employees, including teachers, protested to the council that their salaries did not even reach those of peons.<sup>84</sup> As a response, during 1916-1917 the council raised existing taxes, including the fees on municipal headtaxes, slaughterhouses, alcohol sales, licenses for commercial houses, and created a number of alcabala-type taxes.<sup>85</sup> The teachers' pay increase of 1916 was insufficient and by October all but two

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<sup>82</sup> AMH, box 39, Hacienda, 'Exp. 26. Relativo a listas de morosos de las contribuciones de Chicontepec y municipal personal', Huehuetla 1911 and 'Cortes de Caja', Jan-July 1911.

<sup>83</sup> AMH, box 42, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 2. Relativo al movimiento de empleados de las escuelas. Año de 1915'.

<sup>84</sup> Teachers in the headtown and in Caxhuacan were paid monthly salaries of \$30, just above \$20 in Chilococho and under \$20 in the ranchería. AMH, box 40, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 1. Relativo a noticias de fondos escolares. Año de 1915'; box 50, Tesorería, 'Exp. 7. Que contiene los comprobantes de sueldos del director de la Escuela Vicente Guerrero de San Miguel. 1912';

<sup>85</sup> AMH, box 37, 'Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento Constitucional de este Municipio Libre. Diciembre 1915 a diciembre 1916', entry for 18 Dec 1915, 19 Feb 1916. Similar taxes were budgeted for 1918, see AMH, box 40, Presidencia, 'Proyecto de plan de arbitrios', Huehuetla 24 Nov 1917.

teachers had resigned.<sup>86</sup> But in 1917, after creating and increasing a number of taxes on commercial transactions, teachers returned, schools were opened and worked for the whole of 1917 in spite of the forays of the Zapatistas.<sup>87</sup> Yet another pay increase came in 1918. The director's salary at the boys' school increased from \$60 to \$75 per month, and the female teacher's raised from \$50 to \$62.<sup>88</sup> The salary at Chilocoyo remained the same. Notably, the schooldirectors at the headtown, even the female teacher, earned considerably more than the council's secretary with a salary of \$45. Only the treasurer, paid \$75, earned more.<sup>89</sup> The lower salaries paid in the rancherías, however, must have affected schools: teachers would generally be less qualified, and were more likely to leave as they had a greater chance of improving their salary than the headtown teachers.<sup>90</sup>

Despite the council's efforts to raise revenue for teachers' salaries, the consequences of the 1917 revolutionary turmoil reached Huehuetla's schools in June 1918. President Antonio García reported that, subject to the state government's approval, the council had decided to close all schools as of 16 June due to the special circumstances in the region and the lack of funds. From then on, education would depend on the good will of teachers who might be ready to work unpaid or, alternatively, on private initiative as it did in Cuetzalan. In Huehuetla after the announcement of closure, Amada Mora, teacher at the girls' school,

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<sup>86</sup> AMH, box 37, 'Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento Constitucional de este Municipio Libre. Diciembre 1915 a diciembre 1916', entries for 17 and 24 April, 8 May, 11 and 14 Oct, 26 Nov 1916.

<sup>87</sup> AMH, box 38, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 4', untitled file containing attendance registers for 1917.

<sup>88</sup> AMH, box 40, Tesorería, untitled file, Huehuetla Feb-Nov 1917 and box 42, Instrucción Pública, 'Datos que se rinden al inspector de la zona norte del estado', Huehuetla 12 May 1917.

<sup>89</sup> For teachers' and secretaries' salaries see Appendix Six, Table 2.

insisted that her school remained open. The council obliged and offered a reduced salary, which Mora first rejected as insufficient but when the council accepted her refusal, she chose not hand over the school and continued teaching in August and September.<sup>91</sup> Unfortunately, she probably had to close in October because of the arrival of the Spanish influenza epidemic in Huehuetla. The disease took the lives of 164 men and 225 women, most of whom died in November and December 1918.<sup>92</sup>

In September 1919, after orders from Gabriel Barrios' hometown of Cuacuila, the schools in the municipal seat re-opened in time for the Independence celebrations. Teachers Leopoldo López Ruanova and Amada Mora resumed their work in the headtown in September and had exams by the end of December but the teacher in the barrio of Chilococho resigned. Despite the re-openings in 1919, the crucial question of how to fund schools after Chicontepec had been officially abolished, and with widespread resistance to tax payments of any kind, remained a problem. Whereas in Cuetzalan voluntary donations were organised as early as 1919 after Gabriel Barrios' exhortation to open schools, in Huehuetla the authorities first concentrated on collecting property taxes, which were to feed municipal coffers after the December 1917 decree by the state government.<sup>93</sup> They also sought support from Puebla to make collection effective through coercive measures but no help came from the state government. In November 1919

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<sup>90</sup> AMH, box 42, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 7. Escuelas Públicas. Movimiento de directores y ayudantes. 1910', Villa de Ramón Corral, 16 March 1910.

<sup>91</sup> AMH, box 43, Instrucción Pública, 'Movimientos escolares correspondientes a 1918'; box 45, Instrucción Pública, Amada Mora to Presidente, Huehuetla 8 July 1918 and Presidente to Directora, Huehuetla 12 July 1918.

<sup>92</sup> There are no total population figures for 1917 or 1918. AMH, box 65, Fomento, 'Exp. no. 7. Relativo a la estadística de defunciones por la gripe de 1918', Huehuetla 28 July 1922.

Huehuetla informed Zacatlán that they had been unable to impose the property tax because property owners were unwilling to pay.<sup>94</sup> Despite exhortations from the municipal president of Zacatlán, phonecalls from Gabriel Barrios and visits from the state inspector for schools, the situation had not changed by mid-1920 and teachers' salaries had not been paid.<sup>95</sup> Only the school directed by Amada Mora and the boys' school in Caxhuacan remained open.<sup>96</sup> The state inspector reminded Huehuetla that on the basis of article 124 of the educational law they could also exhort the population to make donations.<sup>97</sup> In fact, there had been an attempt to do so in 1919. The council appointed a commission to raise funds independently from the municipal treasury and headed by two Totonac authorities. However, no collections took place. The municipal president concluded that without a compulsory monthly tax, and some form of coercion to make it effective, there would be no chance of sustaining schools.<sup>98</sup>

Following the abolition of headtaxes, the state government issued a number of decrees creating alternative taxes to meet municipal needs, namely the above mentioned property tax (*predial*) in 1917, as well as a number of additional

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<sup>93</sup> See Chapter Four.

<sup>94</sup> AMH, box 51, Libro de Actas de Acuerdos del H. Concejo Municipal de Huehuetla. Junio a Diciembre de 1919', entries for 8, 13, 20, 27 Sep, 11 Oct, 1 Nov and 20 Dec 1919.

<sup>95</sup> AMH, box 60, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 3. Relativo a datos de organización y funcionamiento de las escuelas', Huehuetla 25 June 1920.

<sup>96</sup> Amada Mora complained of the paucity of payments since January 1920. AMH, box 60, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 1. Relativo a las gestiones de la Señorita Directora de la escuela de niñas para pagársele su sueldo en plata y no en oro', Huehuetla 16 June 1920.

<sup>97</sup> AMH, box 60, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 2. Hacienda. Relativo a que se procure que la contribución de 2 y 4 al millar de fincas urbanas y rústicas se cobre con toda regularidad', Antonio Olvera M. to Presidente Huehuetla, Zacatlán 8 July 1920; Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 7 Relativo al acuse de recibo que envía el Prof. C. Antonio Vela', Zacatlán 9 July 1920.

<sup>98</sup> AMH, box 60, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 3. Relativo a un informe rendido al C. Coronel Gabriel Barrios concerniente a las escuelas de este departamento', Huehuetla 5 Aug 1920.

fees on existing taxes (*adicionales*) in 1921-1923.<sup>99</sup> Additionally there were plans to fund schools from the state treasury. However, as happened in Cuetzalan, state government promises to pay teachers' salaries came to nothing in Huehuetla. In July 1922 the state educational administration announced it would only be able to pay for the teachers' salaries in the *primarias* and *subprimarias* in the municipal seats. The municipalities would be in charge of the provision and maintenance of buildings and school equipment. But they did not even fulfil this objective.<sup>100</sup> The role of the state government was reduced to the visits of the school inspectors, who, after 1920, were instructed to supervise the use of local educational funds.<sup>101</sup>

Given the inadequacy of the new taxes, all of the schools in the municipality had to be closed down in 1923. It was clear that neither the municipal efforts to increase local production and commerce taxes, nor the 1917 property taxes or the 1921 additional taxes, were efficient enough to sustain schools.<sup>102</sup> In the end, voluntary donations were organised, allegedly on the spontaneous initiative of a number of Huehuetecos. When the council decided to close down the schools, a group of residents interested in keeping schools open decided to consult the population. Receiving the approval of a majority of residents, the Huehuetecos presented the council with a list of all men who had agreed to contribute with a monthly fee of 50 cents and a proposal for the organisation of an independent committee. The committee would organise

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<sup>99</sup> On these taxes see Chapter Four.

<sup>100</sup> AMH, box 65, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 21. Relativo a la centralización de las escuelas', Puebla 1 July 1922.

<sup>101</sup> AMH, box 59, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 1. Relativo a las visitas de Inspección Pedagógica a las escuelas oficiales' Zacatlán 22 Sep and 7 Oct 1920.

<sup>102</sup> For problems with the 1921 additional taxes (*adicionales*) see AMH, box 59, Tesorería, Presidente M. Espinosa to Tesorero, Huehuetla 2 Jan 1922.

collection and manage the funds. Once a sufficient amount was collected, the committee would pass the sum on to the council for paying teachers' salaries and purchasing school equipment. The independent committee would supervise the council's spending while the latter remained in charge of implementing educational regulations. In sum, Huehuetecos had come up with a form of organisation that blurred the line between private and public resources. Via an independent committee the population would fund education, but the council still implemented educational regulations, such as the inspection of schools, so in the end schools would be official, not private.

Zacatlán approved the arrangement in June 1923. When a Zacatlán tax inspector arrived in Huehuetla in 1924, the Huehuetla council emphasised that the instruction fund was a private initiative and that a private committee, rather than the council, had organised it. By claiming that fund raising for the schools was a private matter, Huehuetla did not have to take the trouble to seek approval from the state government, which was indispensable to impose any new taxes. Additionally the town sought to be exempted from paying the federal contribution, a fee which added a percentage to all local taxes and was paid to the federal government. The tax inspector from Zacatlán agreed that the contributions, although dedicated to public benefit, were spontaneous and would not be considered as taxes. Huehuetla was therefore exempted from the federal contribution, but would pay a fee to contribute to the salary of the state schools inspector.<sup>103</sup> However they might account for how the 'voluntary donations' had

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<sup>103</sup> In 1929 they contributed \$22 monthly for the inspector's salary, just over a third of a ranchería teacher's salary. AMH, box 62, Tesorería, untitled file, Acta de la Visita del Administrador Subalterno del Timbre de Zacatlán, Huehuetla 22 Aug 1924; box 60, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 2.

come about, in effect, what Huehuetla and many other pueblos throughout the Sierra were doing was resurrecting, *de facto*, the Chicontepec tax. A formal organisation of such tax was constitutionally impossible after 1917 but by giving it the name of 'voluntary donations', the pueblo retained the autonomy to deal with school funding and the advantage of not paying federal taxes. Although somewhat downgraded from 'Chicontepec tax' to 'voluntary donation', this was the very same payment which the Totonac caciques saw as an Indian contribution and on the basis of which they had justified their political right to hold an Indian-only plebiscite in 1925.

From 1924, all residents paid 50 cents monthly towards sustaining schools. Collectors received as payment four percent of the total amount collected. The documents for the 'educational treasury' included the receipts for the secretary's salary suggesting the school funds also provided for this payment, just as the Chicontepec tax had done before its abolition. In the same year, accounts were healthy enough for the school funds to donate \$1,000 to resume the public works to introduce piped water, which had stopped in 1923.<sup>104</sup> Evidence for the second half of the 1920s further indicates that the organisation of the 50-cents monthly donation brought some stability to the existing schools and expansion of education in the municipality. Only the events of 1925 temporarily disturbed school funding.

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Relativo al presupuesto de ingresos y egresos de instrucción pública para 1929', Huehuetla 24 Oct 1928.

<sup>104</sup> AMH, box 55, Tesorería, 'Exp. Tesorería de Instrucción Pública. Año de 1925'; box 59, Presidencia, 'Libro de Actas para el año de 1926', entry for 29 Dec 1926; box 62, Tesorería, 'Padrón auxiliar para el cobro de la pensión de escuelas. Año 1924'; box 62, Tesorería, 'Pensión de Escuelas. Año 1927'; Untitled file, Acta de la Visita del Administrador Subalterno del Timbre de Zacatlán, Huehuetla 22 Aug 1924; box 63, Tesorería de Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 3. Relativo a documentos de cargo y data de los ingresos y egresos verificados', March 1928; box 65,

In mid-1925 Inspector Aurelio C. Merino found there were practically no school materials and the teachers' salaries had not been paid. The provisional council imposed by the state government after the Indian plebiscite explained that a group of disaffected men had been persuading the population not to contribute with school donations. The provisional municipal president had already raised a complaint to the educational authorities in Puebla City, requesting their support to make the collection of donations effective. Legally, however, Puebla could do little more than appeal to the population's 'patriotism' to voluntarily contribute to the educational effort.<sup>105</sup> Yet, as seen above, Totonac disaffection was brief and, when the Indian caciques returned to ally with non-Indians, the administration of schools went back to normal. Despite the deficiencies observed by inspector Merino, in December 1925 exams took place in seven schools in the municipality.<sup>106</sup>

In 1926 the council decided to open a school in the *ranchería* of Lipuntahuaca named after the educationalist Gregorio Torres Quintero. Additionally, the council, concerned with attracting good teachers, raised salaries for the headtown. New director Ricardo Sosa and Rosaura Pignataro would earn respectively \$90 and \$80 monthly salaries. Pignataro had left behind Cuetzalan's factionalism and indefinite pay delays. In Huehuetla she was offered a post with a

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Presidencia, 'Padrón para la colecta de fondos destinados a la introducción del agua potable', Huehuetla 1923.

<sup>105</sup> AMH, box 56, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 20. Relativo a la visita oficial de las escuelas por el C. Inspector Pedagógico de la segunda zona. 1925', Huehuetla 7 and 11 Aug 1925. AGEP-SEP-MPE, box 60, file 60.7. 'Junta Directiva de Educación Primaria. Huehuetla', Presidente Municipal Provisional Francisco Ramírez to Secretario General de Gobierno, Huehuetla 10 July 1925.

<sup>106</sup> There were two schools each in Huehuetla and Caxhuacan, and one each in Chilocoyo, Cinco de Mayo and Xunapu. AMH, box 62, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 22. Relativo a los exámenes generales en las escuelas oficiales, de fin de año escolar. 1925'.



more stable salary and two-room accommodation next to the school.<sup>107</sup> School attendance in the headtown had risen, reaching an average of 70 boys and 40 girls in 1927. With over 20 pupils, Chilocoyo had doubled attendance since the 1910s; similar figures were found in the *rancherías* of Xunapu and San Miguel. Salaries were increased again in 1929. This is not to say that, under voluntary funding, municipal schools flourished, but there was at least a minimal provision. That the situation was nonetheless precarious is illustrated by Caxhuacan's decision to close the girls' school after the director resigned. The *pueblo* authorities argued that the building was in complete disrepair and *faenas* to rebuild it could only be provided after work in the new market was finished. The local treasury could not afford to pay workers.<sup>108</sup>

So far, other than disturbing the collection of the Chicontepec tax, and impoverishing communities, the revolution had had little impact on schools. But beyond school funding, did the revolution make a difference? Let us now turn to the question of language in schools in order to find out what changed and what remained the same.

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<sup>107</sup> Pignataro's salary in Cuetzalan was officially \$90 per month, but this was often reduced to \$60 or simply not paid when funds were insufficient. AMC, 'Libro de Actas y Acuerdos para el año de 1924', entries for 7 April, 12 May and 4 Aug 1924. AMH, box 59, Presidencia, Libro de Actas para el año de 1926', entries for 20 Jan, 15 March, 14 April, 6 Oct, 22 Nov 1926.

<sup>108</sup> AMH, box 52, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 5. Relativo a la aprobación de acuerdos elaborados por la Junta Auxiliar de Caxhuacan. 1927', Acta de Sesión, Caxhuacan 5 Feb 1927; Presidente Municipal to Presidente Caxhuacan, Huehuetla 23 Feb 1927.

The state of Puebla's 1919 educational legislation introduced a new classification of elementary schools. From the most basic to those providing a full primary education, schools would be classified as *rudimentarias*, *sub-elementales* and *elementales* or *primarias*. This was an effort to adapt to the varying needs and resources in different parts of the state.<sup>109</sup> Legislators predicted that the cities and the richest municipal seats would have *primarias* offering a six-year programme, the more modest municipal seats would have *sub-elementales* with a four-year programme and the subject pueblos, barrios and rancherías would sustain *rudimentarias* with a programme of two years in Spanish-speaking localities and three years in monolingual Indian localities, where the first grade would be entirely dedicated to learning the national language.<sup>110</sup> While in states like Oaxaca and Estado de México there had been efforts to address the language issue since the Porfiriato, the 1919 legislation was the first time that the Puebla state government officially recognised the need to dedicate time exclusively to the teaching of the Spanish language.<sup>111</sup> It was a belated response to a debate that

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<sup>109</sup> Similar measures had been proposed by Angel W. Cabrera after the new education bill was passed in 1893 but did not gain currency among educationalists and legislators in Puebla City. Cabrera's proposal was published in *El Escolar Zacateco*, no. 32, 15 May 1893, quoted in José Angel Fabre Baños, *Los prenormalistas*, pp. 13-14. See also 'Ley de Instrucción Pública Orgánica del Título XI de la Constitución', *POEP*, Puebla 27 March 1893.

<sup>110</sup> On the state congress's debates on this topic before passing the 1919 education bill see Estela Munguía, *Continuidad y cambio en la legislación educativa*, pp. 71-76. *Ley de Educación Primaria para las Escuelas del Estado de 4 de febrero de 1919*, *POEP*, Sección de Leyes, 1919.

<sup>111</sup> For the efforts in Estado de México see Milada Bazant, *En busca de la modernidad*, pp. 215-223. For the teachers' proposals to reduce programmes in indigenous localities in Oaxaca see María Bertely, 'Panorama histórico de la educación para los indígenas en México' in Luz Elena Galván Lafarga (ed.) *Diccionario de Historia de la Educación en México* (México: UNAM, 2002)

started in Mexico City with the first educational congresses during the Porfiriato and saw its first legislative outcome in the 1911 law for 'rudimentary' education. The 1919 Puebla legislation additionally required that teachers at the *rudimentarias* spoke the language of the locality to impart the first teachings in the children's language, a premise that, as we will see below, ran counter to the prevalent opinion in Mexico City and was not always fulfilled in the Sierra schools. I now turn to such debates in the capital of the country including the discussion from 1922 among officials at the Ministry of Education (*Secretaría de Educación Pública*, SEP).

The 1911 law for 'rudimentary' education was the first attempt by the revolutionary government to address rural education. Inspired in part by the ideas of the Porfirian educationalist Gregorio Torres Quintero, it proposed to open schools which would only teach the three Rs. Additionally, it specified that indigenous children would be taught to speak and to read and write in Spanish as well as learn basic arithmetic. Criticised as having too narrow an objective, it was an attempt to spread literacy as widely as possible and a recognition that the national language would not always be learnt spontaneously outside the school and needed to be taught. This and later programmes proposed by Torres Quintero and subsequently by SEP official Rafael Ramírez in the 1920s rejected any teaching that took place in an indigenous language. Before children were instructed in mathematics, geography or history, they first had to learn Spanish. Moreover, the national language had to be taught without using the native language at all, and avoiding any translation, following a method of direct hispanicisation or *castellanización directa*.

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The pedagogical justification to promote this method was that the second language would be best learned if teachers imitated the natural process by which children learned their first language. They would simply listen to it and learn by imitation. The teacher would facilitate the process by showing the objects or representations and saying the words for the child to repeat and practice until they were learned. Activities such as walks and school trips, the use of maps and illustrations and the reproduction of everyday situations in and outside the classroom were encouraged to increase the children's vocabulary and development of language abilities. When they had reached a certain competency in the language, questions and answers and simple conversations would occupy most of the schoolday.

The method proscribed the use of Indian languages in the classroom on the basis that they would discourage children from learning Spanish. Rafael Ramírez went further and directly linked Indian languages to the backwardness which teachers were to extirpate. He argued that if teachers used the indigenous languages they would end up being absorbed by the poverty and lower culture of their pupils rather than integrating the Indian into the advanced national culture.<sup>112</sup> Those who defended the direct method or *castellanización directa* including Torres Quintero, Ramírez and Carrancista intellectual Luis Cabrera from Zacatlán, were also in favour of the disappearance of Indian languages.<sup>113</sup> To what extent

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<sup>112</sup> Rafael Ramírez, *Cómo dar a todo México un idioma* [1st edition 1928] quoted in Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *Teoría y práctica de la educación indígena* (México: FCE, 1992), pp. 76-77.

<sup>113</sup> Luis Cabrera, 'El balance de la Revolución (30 enero 1931)' in Eugenia Meyer (ed.) *Luis Cabrera: Teórico y crítico de la Revolución* (Mexico: SEP-Setentas, 1972), pp. 128, 131-135. Shirley Brice Heath, *La política del lenguaje*, pp. 115-150. Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *Teoría y práctica de la educación indígena* (México: FCE, 1992), pp. 59-64, 75-77. Gloria Bravo Ahuja, *La enseñanza del español a los indígenas mexicanos* (Mexico: Colegio de México, 1977), pp. 92-96.

did the changes in state-level legislation and the national debates influence education in Huehuetla? Below I look at the ethnic and gender distribution of pupils, as well as their levels of participation, in the different grades and schools across the municipality. This will be followed by an examination of classroom practice with special reference to the teaching of Spanish to Totonac children.

The programmes for patriotic festivals show a greater number of non-Indian children contributing to recitations, poetry readings and speeches.<sup>114</sup> Although Totonac boys attended the school at the headtown, the Huehuetla schooldirector normally chose non-Indian pupils to contribute to the festivities' programmes. The few Totonac children who became protagonists normally came from the *ranchería* schools and were boys. Many non-Indian girls from the headtown's school participated as speakers in the festivities, but ethnic and gender inequalities conflated so that no Totonac girls appeared as speakers in the programmes.<sup>115</sup> In fact, practically all of the girls in the headtown school, as well as the mixed establishment at Chilocoyo, were non-Indian.<sup>116</sup> The *ranchería* schools, where more Totonacs were likely to register, remained boys-only despite an attempt to incorporate girls in 1917.<sup>117</sup> This reinforces the evidence found for

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<sup>114</sup> AMH, box 51, Instrucción Pública, 'Programa para la solemnización de la festividad nacional del 5 de Mayo', Huehuetla 3 May 1913; Rafaela Arroyo to Presidente, Chilocoyo 28 Aug 1913; Carmen Carballo to Presidente, Huehuetla 31 Aug 1913; Leopoldo López Ruanova to Presidente, Huehuetla 2 Sep 1913; Amada Mora to Presidente, Huehuetla 22 Aug 1913; box 55, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 16. Relativo a Festividades Cívicas Nacionales. Año de 1922'.

<sup>115</sup> AMH, box 64, Instrucción Pública, 'Borrador de Oficios. Escuela Vicente Guerrero. Cinco de Mayo. Año de 1927', 20 Aug 1927; box 65, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 17. Relativo a registro de asistencia escolar', Cinco de Mayo, 1922.

<sup>116</sup> AMH, box 65, 'Exp. 20. Relativo a visitas a las escuelas por el inspector pedagógico', Huehuetla 27 July 1922.

<sup>117</sup> AMH, box 37, 'Libro de Acuerdos del Ayuntamiento Constitucional de este Municipio Libre. Diciembre 1915 a diciembre 1916', entry for 26 Nov 1916.

Cuetzalan that Indian boys were more likely to attend school if they lived outside the headtown, where they possibly experienced less discrimination than in the *cabecera*, given that in the latter they had to share the classroom with children whose native language was Spanish. In the case of civic festivities, while the *cabecera* teachers had many Spanish-speaking children to choose from for poems and recitations, the instructors in the villages had few, if any, non-Indian students and would more easily pick and train an Indian pupil to speak at festivals.

Further differentiation is found within each school. The ethnic group and number of pupils per grade provide a fuller picture of who attended schools and for how long. In 1922 the boys' school had an average registration of 70 boys distributed in three grades. Typically the first grade had the highest registration; in this case there were 45, 16 and 9 children respectively in each of the three grades. Evidence for the girls' school shows a similar distribution per grade and this was the case throughout the period of study.<sup>118</sup> What such distribution suggests, given that it remains constant throughout the years, is that most children who attended school only did so for one year only, some did for two years and a small minority stayed longer. Further evidence that children left before the available three or four years of schooling were completed, comes from teachers' observations.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> See Appendix Six, Tables 3-10 'Distribution of pupils per grade in Huehuetla'.

<sup>119</sup> AMH, box 30, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 3. Escuelas Públicas. Faltas de asistencia', Huehuetla Jan-Dec 1910; box 42, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 7. Escuelas Públicas. Movimiento de directores y ayudantes. 1910', Villa de Ramón Corral, 16 March 1910; box 43, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 1. Relativo a las escuelas públicas' Huehuetla, Jan 1910. For all registration and attendance figures available for the headtown schools see Appendix Three, Tables 2 and 3.

Notably, most students who stayed for the second and third years of Huehuetla's and Caxhuacan's boys' school were non-Indian.<sup>120</sup>

Although Totonac children normally attended the first grade only, there were signs that improvements in Indian education might come: the language problem was now being addressed rather than glossed over or ignored. In Huehuetla at least since 1921 the first grade was in turn divided into two sections: one called 'infant' or 'indigenous group' for children who did not speak Spanish yet, and a first year proper. The 'indigenous' group only had three subjects instead of the prescribed eight to ten.<sup>121</sup> Additionally, exam juries in Huehuetla, composed of the usual non-Indian notables, began to notice the issue of language in examination reports.<sup>122</sup>

Non-Indian schoolmaster Leopoldo López Ruanova took it upon himself to provide an education tailored to Totonac children. The work of Ruanova in Huehuetla allows us to see how indigenist rhetoric, linked to a new awareness of the specific problems of indigenous peoples, was appropriated at the local level. Such appropriation could serve the interests of individuals and was compatible

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<sup>120</sup> In Caxhuacan, Totonacs rarely figured in the second grade, which was attended mainly by the children of the dominant non-Indian families (Castañeda, Nava and Párraga), see AMH, box 59, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 25. Relativo a documentación de exámenes. 1929', Acta y Calificaciones, Caxhuacan 27 Nov 1929.

<sup>121</sup> These were reading, writing and Spanish language; arithmetic and geometry, and drawing and handicrafts (the latter subject had replaced 'hygiene and morals' taught in the previous year). AMH, box 65, Instrucción Pública, 'Movimientos de la escuela oficial subelemental de niños Benito Juárez. Año 1922', 'Calificaciones de Reconocimientos y Exámenes', Huehuetla 23 Nov 1922; box 55, Instrucción Pública, Calificaciones de la escuela Benito Juárez, Huehuetla 26 Nov 1921.

<sup>122</sup> AMH, box 55, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 4. Relativo a reconocimientos y exámenes generales de las escuelas oficiales del municipio. Año 1923'; AMH, box 56, Instrucción Pública, untitled file, 'Acta de Examen', Xunapu 28 Nov 1922; 'Exp. no. 16. Relativo al Censo Escolar de la República. Año de 1923', Huehuetla 13 April 1923.

with conservative politics. The indigenist tone of Ruanova's correspondence in 1927 would have pleased the most radical officer in the Ministry of Education or the Agrarian Reform Department and yet Ruanova's revolutionary rhetoric was accompanied by pragmatic and conservative politics. In the 1920s he allied with landowners and local notables to engage in land transactions pre-empting agrarian reform. Throughout the 1930s he was an active member of the local agrarian committee which sought to prevent land distribution.<sup>123</sup>

Leopoldo López Ruanova was the son of a muleteer from Zacatlán. Seeking to escape a future of carrying heavy loads across the Sierra as his father did, Leopoldo went to school in Papantla (Veracruz) and later settled in Huehuetla. He was ambitious and intelligent, and made a career mainly as a secretary and scribe, but also as a teacher. Although he did not possess any teaching qualifications, by 1913 *Ciudadano* Leopoldo López Ruanova was in charge of the main speeches for the most important civic festivals. In 1914 he was teaching Indian and non-Indian boys at the *cabecera* school. A master of embellished writing and calligraphy, he could give a speech in Spanish, Totonac or Nahuatl at a time when the non-Indians' ability to speak Indian languages was possibly in decline.<sup>124</sup> During the 1920s he was secretary and scribe in Huehuetla

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<sup>123</sup> Interview with Leopoldo López Juárez, Huehuetla 10 July 2003. AMH, box 59, Presidencia, 'Libro de registros de credenciales de representantes de los partidos políticos para las elecciones de diputados y senadores que tendrán verificativo el próximo 2 julio 1922', Huehuetla 20-24 June 1922; 'Libro de Actas del Consejo Electoral Municipal', Huehuetla Oct-Nov 1922. AGAP, file 11494, box 1, doc. 116, Huehuetla 5 Oct 1933; doc 154, Huehuetla 22 Feb 1938.

<sup>124</sup> Interview with Leopoldo López Juárez, Huehuetla 10 July 2003. Interviews with Clementina Ronquillo, Huehuetla September 2001 and July 2003. AMH, box 62, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia del Año Escolar 1920. Escuela oficial subelemental Benito Juárez', Huehuetla 11 June 1921; box 51, Instrucción Pública, 'Programa para la solemnización de la festividad nacional del 5 de Mayo', Huehuetla 3 May 1913; Rafaela Arroyo to Presidente, Chilococho 28 Aug 1913; Carmen Carballo to Presidente, Huehuetla 31 Aug 1913; Leopoldo López Ruanova to Presidente, Huehuetla 2 Sep



and elsewhere in the Sierra.<sup>125</sup> In 1927 he took the post of assistant at the boys' school. Because he knew the Totonac language, which he claimed most teachers who preceded him did not know, he became responsible, on his own initiative, for teaching a group of children who could not speak Spanish.

Ruanova used his knowledge of Totonac as an opportunity to differentiate himself from other teachers and secretaries and to obtain better working conditions. Regarding classroom practice, Ruanova specified that his Totonac pupils would focus on learning the Spanish language and mastering the three Rs, before any other subjects were taught. The description of his work suggests he used Totonac to give instructions and whenever it was necessary to communicate with children, but spent most of the school day in the practice of Spanish. Still, his use of Totonac in the classroom went against the method of *castellanización directa* proposed by educationalists in Mexico City. Ruanova, however, ultimately coincided with the latter in his opinion of Indian languages. Although he spoke of the Totonac pupils as his fellow countrymen, Ruanova saw Spanish as the only proper language, describing Totonac as 'rustic'. Through the teaching of Spanish, Ruanova believed, he would enlighten the children's 'dark minds' and thereby fulfil the municipality's patriotic hopes for indigenous education.<sup>126</sup>

Additionally, Ruanova designed a special timetable with a reduced number of hours and subjects in comparison to the non-Indian group. The Totonac group

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1913; Amada Mora to Presidente, Huehuetla 22 Aug 1913; box 48, Instrucción Pública, 'Registro de asistencia de la Escuela Benito Juárez', Huehuetla 31 Jan 1914.

<sup>125</sup> AMH, box 48, Presidencia, Camilo Juárez to Leopoldo L. Ruanova, Huehuetla 1 Jan 1919; box 65, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 7. Relativo al movimiento de directores de las escuelas oficiales del departamento', Presidente to Junta Municipal de Educación Primaria, Huehuetla, May 1922.

would work from 8:30 to 12:15, finishing several hours earlier than the other groups.<sup>127</sup> This timetable did not follow educational regulations and although it might have made school more compatible with children's agricultural and domestic tasks, it was also an advantageous schedule for the teacher, who was nonetheless paid a full salary. The school, in any case, was too small a space for Ruanova's ambitions. After an early and failed attempt to resign in April, Ruanova finally had his resignation accepted at the end of the year.<sup>128</sup> Filogonio Domínguez, whose adequacy as a teacher had been questioned by his political rivals in Caxhuacan in 1925, replaced Ruanova as teacher of the Totonac group in 1928. Domínguez, who did not speak Totonac, found it would make no sense to teach the subjects in the programme and decided to dedicate the year 1928 to teaching Spanish until the pupils could understand his instructions.<sup>129</sup>

As will be seen below, evidence from across the ex-district of Zacatlán provides greater detail on teaching methods and suggests that many teachers did not know the Indian languages, that they saw them as obstacles to progress, and that, whether or not they were familiar with Mexico City's pedagogues' views on the subject, they used the SEP's preferred method of direct hispanicisation.

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<sup>126</sup> AMH, box 52, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 8. Relativo a la distribución diaria del tiempo en las escuelas oficiales 1927', Leopoldo L. Ruanova to Presidente, Huehuetla 16 and 21 March 1927.

<sup>127</sup> AMH, box 43, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 5. Distribuciones de tiempo del presente año', Huehuetla, Xunapu, Chilocoyo and Vista Hermosa, Jan 1911; box 60, Instrucción Pública, Distribución diaria de tiempo, Cinco de Mayo, 10 Jan 1929.

<sup>128</sup> AMH, box 52, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 1. Relativo al movimiento de personal docente. 1927', Leopoldo L. Ruanova to Presidente, Huehuetla 23 April and 26 Dec 1927; 'Exp. no. 8. Relativo a la distribución diaria del tiempo en las escuelas oficiales 1927', Rosaura Pignataro, Huehuetla 1 Feb 1927; Manuel Palacios, Huehuetla 21 March 1927; Leopoldo L. Ruanova to Presidente, Huehuetla 16 and 21 March, 22 and 31 Aug 1927.

Among municipal teachers across the ex-district of Zacatlán and the SEP officials recruited in the Sierra there was a marked emphasis on keeping the curriculum simple and teaching Spanish before instructing the pupils in reading and writing or introducing any other subjects.<sup>130</sup>

In the municipality of Zacatlán and in spite of census figures that 86 per cent of the population spoke Spanish, SEP officials visiting the area painted a different picture. In 1928, writing of Zacatlán and its surrounding Indian pueblos and barrios, many of which already had federal schools, a teacher observed that 'not everyone understands or speaks Spanish' and 'they are reluctant to learn it and practice it'. Another official calculated that, at the most, ten per cent of the population in the villages spoke Spanish. If the teachers' observations were right, the census figure of around 10 per cent Indian monolinguals was most likely an underestimation, even when taking into account the Spanish-speaking majority at the headtown.<sup>131</sup>

Awareness of the language issue spread among the teachers sustained by municipal or community funds too. In 1929 Ramón Galindo of Zacatlán and Buenaventura R. Sánchez, former teacher in Huehuetla, organised the publication of a newspaper dedicated exclusively to give a voice to the Sierra Norte teachers' concerns. The publication, printed in Zacatlán, was called *Mil Novecientos Diez* with the motto 'literacy for the race'. Most of the teachers who sent letters and

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<sup>129</sup> AMH, box 59, 'Acta de examen de la escuela sub-primaria para niños Benito Juárez' Huehuetla 22 Nov 1928.

<sup>130</sup> AHSEP-DECI, box 15, exp. 4. Rafael Molina B., Labor que se propone llevar a cabo en la Sierra Norte del Estado de Puebla el Profesor Rafael Molina B., México 17 Oct 1921.

<sup>131</sup> Secretaría de la Economía Nacional. Dirección General de Estadística, *Quinto Censo de la Población, 1930* (México, 1930). AHSEP, Misiones Culturales, box 45, exp. 5, Cuestionario para

brief articles between October 1929 and February 1930 were non-Indian and mostly ignorant of the Nahuatl and Totonac languages spoken in the district (confirming teacher Ruanova's claims). A teacher lamented that this situation disheartened many who, faced with a class who did not understand them and they could not understand, found the task of educating Indians impossible. Yet many wrote to share the methods used to teach Spanish. In order to learn vocabulary and expressions, emphasis was made in the use of real objects, pointing to body parts or making gestures to represent abstract nouns. Words and sentences should be pronounced clearly and slowly and repeated as many times as necessary.<sup>132</sup> The much recommended *paseos escolares*, which in Huehuetla took place on Saturday mornings, were promoted as an ideal opportunity to teach geography but in some cases were primarily a lesson in the national language by pointing to mountains, ravines, plants and flowers while pronouncing the words in Spanish.<sup>133</sup>

For children who had acquired sufficient vocabulary and already understood complete sentences, the Zacatlán newspaper published examples of language exercises which consisted of questions and answers and simple

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la investigación acerca de la vida económica y social, México D.F. 7 Feb 1928; exp. 6, Ing Juan A. González to Director de Misiones Culturales, México D.F. 28 Feb 1928.

<sup>132</sup> 'Educación Preparatoria de Indígenas' and Edmundo Garrido, 'Mis primeros ensayos en la enseñanza de la geografía a niños indígenas', *Mil Novecientos Diez. Órgano mensual de los Maestros de las Escuelas de la Sierra Norte del Estado de Puebla*, Zacatlán, 15 Oct 1929. L. Luis, 'Por el Indio', *Mil Novecientos Diez*, 15 Jan. 1930.

<sup>133</sup> On *paseos escolares* and other outdoor activities in Huehuetla see AMH, box 42, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no.2. Relativo a movimiento de empleados de las escuelas', Distribución diaria de tiempo, Chilococho 12 April 1915; box 62, Instrucción Pública, 'Inventario de la Escuela de Niños Melchor Ocampo', Caxhuacan 14 May 1921. For similar activities in another Totonac municipality see José M. Manzano, 'Educación de Alumnos Indígenas', *Mil Novecientos Diez. Órgano mensual de los Maestros de las Escuelas de la Sierra Norte del Estado de Puebla*, Zacatlán, 15 Nov 1929.

conversations during agricultural tasks on the school plot.<sup>134</sup> The teaching of geography through observation was endorsed in Puebla at least since the Porfiriato. Agricultural practice was recommended at least since the 1890s and practised successfully in Xochiapulco but was not widespread.<sup>135</sup> Porfirian teachers might have followed practices similar to those outlined above for teaching Spanish. Yet the discussion and visibility of the language issue and the heightened concern for the specific problems faced by indigenous children were a new phenomenon for the Sierra Norte de Puebla.

Modern ideas of childhood which criticised excessive discipline and rigidity in school and tight schedules that would 'cram' pupils' heads were adopted in the cities and spread to the Sierra, proposing the correct ways to treat Indian children. In the various letters and articles penned by Sierra teachers for *Mil Novecientos Diez*, Indian children were sympathetically perceived as vulnerable creatures in an alien environment, that of the school, the national language and the modern world. At the same time 'the Indian child' was constructed as wayward, ignorant and incapable of expressing his needs. Explicit statements of the inferiority of Indian languages were not predominant. Yet, implicitly, most teachers assumed that they were inferior, for instance by calling them dialects, or they simply saw them as an obstacle for progress and nation-building. The language difference made communication between teachers and pupils difficult and provoked frustration on both sides.<sup>136</sup> More importantly, and

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<sup>134</sup> See the various 'Ejercicios de Lenguaje' in *Mil Novecientos Diez*, 15 Jan, 15 Feb 1930

<sup>135</sup> Mary K. Vaughan, *The State, Education and Social Class*, pp. 30-33. On the school at Xochiapulco see Enrique Juan Palacios, *Puebla, su territorio y sus habitantes*, p. 342.

<sup>136</sup> 'Educación Preparatoria de Indígenas' and Ruben Cano, 'El niño actual', *Mil Novecientos Diez. Órgano Mensual de los Maestros de las Escuelas de la Sierra Norte del Estado de Puebla*,

especially in the eyes of those who did not understand any native tongues, Indians were imperfect and in desperate need of integration because of the simple fact that they did not speak Spanish but an incomprehensible dialect with no recognised literature.<sup>137</sup> How one could live in a land whose official language one did not understand was the implicit question in teachers' discussion of the need to spread the national language. These ideas were reflected in the comments by A. Bonilla, a teacher in the newly formed municipality of Iztepec:<sup>138</sup>

There is no bigger problem for teachers than teaching Spanish to indigenous children and the challenge will be even greater if the child is of the Totonac race. Far from the civilised peoples, the Totonac race is unsociable and hates the mestizo as if driven by an ancient instinct. When children are forcefully taken from their homes and put in school, one finds a sorry spectacle. The children stare at their surroundings with frightened eyes because everything they see is alien. They ignore everything, even their own names! What can the teacher, who does not speak a word of his disciples' dialect, do to combat this supine ignorance?

Characterising the Totonac generally as uncivilised, wayward and imbued with ethnic hatred, Bonilla reproduced a racist stereotype. But seeing children as ignorant and defenceless, and presumably innocent of the adults' negative traits, he made them worthy targets of civilising policies, starting with the teaching of Spanish. For his purposes Bonilla proposed a method of *castellanización directa* and finished his letter to the newspaper with an exhortation that would have pleased Torres Quintero and Rafael Ramírez alike:

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Zacatlán, 15 Oct 1929. See also Chapter Two, section 'Language Difficulties In The Girls' School'.

<sup>137</sup> For the prevalence of negative attitudes against Indian languages in Cuetzalan and Huehuetla in the late twentieth century see Pierre Beaucage, 'The Opossum and the Coyote', pp. 166-167. Isauro Chávez Tomás, 'El aumento de prestigio de la lengua náhuatl' in Eduardo Almeida Acosta y María Eugenia Sánchez Díaz (coords.) *Conocimiento y Acción en Tzinacapan*.

...Let's unify the national language. If in the next four or five years we have managed to uproot from our pueblos all these primitive dialects, we will have taken the first step in the scale of progress and the redemption of the Indian. We will have made a real contribution to the *patria*.<sup>139</sup>

Given this novel awareness of the language problems and the neglect of methods, the teaching of Spanish remained rudimentary. No educationalists, let alone modest teachers of small villages, had thought through the consequences of this problem or the best ways to address it. While the Puebla legislation allowed for one year in which to take Indian children to the level of Spanish-speaking pupils, some teachers observed a greater time would be needed. An instructor in Zacatlán believed that for every year of schooling for Spanish-speakers, two or three years would be needed for Indian pupils. By the late 1920s criticism of *castellanización directa* had grown in the light of disappointing results and attempts at bilingualism commenced.<sup>140</sup>

#### Local, State and Federal Initiatives

All the schools in the municipality of Huehuetla were sustained by voluntary donations throughout the 1920s. Indeed, in the ex-district of Zacatlán there were 47 such schools, compared to only two schools sustained by the state

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<sup>138</sup> Carlos Garma Navarro, *Protestantismo en una comunidad totonaca de Puebla, México* (Mexico: INI, n.d.), p. 38.

<sup>139</sup> *Mil Novecientos Diez. Órgano Mensual de los Maestros de las Escuelas de la Sierra Norte del Estado de Puebla, Zacatlán* 15 Nov. 1929.

<sup>140</sup> 'Una Pregunta', *Mil Novecientos Diez*, 15 Feb 1930. Gloria Bravo Ahuja, *La enseñanza del español*, pp. 96-103. Moisés Sáenz, *Carapán*, pp. 119-127.

government.<sup>141</sup> It was only in the second half of the 1930s that the first federal schools opened in Huehuetla. Thus, throughout the 1920s, insofar as education was concerned, the municipality remained outside the revolutionary government's sphere of influence. Below I consider the significance of this fact and how the ideas developing in Mexico City nonetheless reached Huehuetla.

A crucial step of the new revolutionary government's educational policy was the founding of the SEP. Before then, while educational conferences and a Minister of Public Instruction had developed an incipient bureaucracy in Mexico City, as well as links with educational authorities in the states, the federal government was not authorised to open schools in the states. Federal legislation, although generally emulated by state governments, only applied to Mexico City and the federal territories. By contrast, after 1922, the SEP had jurisdiction to open schools throughout the country, imposing its own regulations. The influence of the executive in Mexico City over education in the states could now be much stronger. Yet, in the 1920s the presence of the SEP in the Sierra Norte was tenuous beyond the ex-district capitals in the more accessible *bocasierra*, where existing schools in barrios and rancherías became federal or new federal schools were opened. As in Cuetzalan, no federal schools were opened in Huehuetla in the 1920s. Three federal schools, in Caxhuacan and two rancherías, opened in Huehuetla in the second half of the 1930s.

Nonetheless, the pedagogical ideas and initiatives promoted by the SEP reached Puebla City and influenced regulations and practices. In turn, state

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<sup>141</sup> In 1925, between the *serrano* ex-districts of Zacatlán, Zacapoaxtla and Tetela there were 87 schools sustained by voluntary donations, compared to only 14 sustained by the state government. AGEP-SEP-MPE, box 48, 'Exp. 112. JDEP. Cuadros relativos a estadística que remiten los inspectores foráneos', Teziutlán 5 Jan 1925 and Zacatlán 22 March 1925.



inspectors spread this influence on their visits not only to the few schools that the Puebla government sustained in ex-district seats and a few municipal seats, but also to the many schools sustained by the population through voluntary donations. Below I consider the effect of the SEP and Puebla state initiatives in Huehuetla through the arrival of books from Mexico City and Puebla, the introduction of farming activities in the school, and the adoption of basketball.

The number of primers and readers in Huehuetla's classrooms, as in Cuetzalan, was insufficient and, given the humid conditions in the region and their intensive use, they were frequently found to be in an almost unreadable condition. In 1917 Huehuetla's boys' school had no books at all. While teacher Buenaventura R. Sánchez awaited materials, he set the pupils in the intermediate course to read newspaper clippings. In their visit, two non-Indian local authorities observed that such readings were inappropriate for the children and recommended that school materials be ordered as soon as possible.<sup>142</sup> We do not know if the materials arrived to replace the newspaper cuttings but the early 1920s saw important efforts, from federal, state, regional and local authorities to equip schools.

In October 1921 Gabriel Barrios provided Huehuetla with school materials and textbooks he had obtained from the state government. But when it came to education, municipalities could play all sides: in the same year that Huehuetla received a delivery from Barrios, they were expecting a box of school equipment

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<sup>142</sup> AMH, box 43, Instrucción Pública, B. R. Sánchez to Presidente, Huehuetla 8 March 1917; box 42, Instrucción Pública, 'Libro de calificaciones. Segundo Reconocimiento' Huehuetla 13 June 1917.

from future governor and Barrios's rival Claudio N. Tirado.<sup>143</sup> By the end of 1922, the initiatives of Secretary of Education José Vasconcelos had reached Huehuetla in the form of a 100-book library. Most of the books reflected Vasconcelos' concern with intellectual development and civilisation as he understood them. Huehuetla received volumes ranging from *Sleeping Beauty* to Nietzsche via Homer and Plato. In a list of predominantly European classics, there was a handful of Mexican authors including Andrés Molina Enríquez's *Grandes Problemas Nacionales* and Justo Sierra's *Historia Patria* as well as a few issues of the literary magazine *El Maestro* published by the Ministry of Education.<sup>144</sup> A sign of the practical concerns of many educational officers in the SEP, if not of Vasconcelos, the collection included a few school textbooks and agricultural manuals.<sup>145</sup> By 1925 the pragmatism predominant among educationalists had become SEP policy. In the same year that the Ministry officially adopted action pedagogy, which included the promotion of productive activities in the schools,

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<sup>143</sup> AMH, box 62, Instrucción Pública, Presidente de la Junta Municipal Provisional to Zacatlán, Huehuetla 19 Oct 1921. Keith Brewster, *Militarism*, p. 131.

<sup>144</sup> Most articles in the magazine '*El Maestro. Revista de Cultura Nacional*' were addressed to students and graduates of Teacher Training Colleges in capital cities and other educated urban men and women. See, for instance, José Gorostiza, 'Recordando a los humildes' in *El Maestro*, vol 1, no. 1, April 1921; 'El Baño', vol. 2, no. 3, December 1921; or Brillat Savarin, 'Aforismos de la fisiología del gusto', vol. 3, no. 1, year 1922.

<sup>145</sup> On Vasconcelos' criticism of action pedagogy, including the teaching of agriculture, and his defence of intellectual exploration through the reading of the classics see his 1935 essay *De Robinson a Odiseo* reprinted in José Vasconcelos, *Textos sobre educación* (México: SEP-FCE, 1981), pp. 32-146. AMH, box 63, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. 10. Relativo a la biblioteca pública municipal cedida por la SEP', Dec 1922.

Huehuetla's girls' school received a second-hand Singer sewing machine from the SEP.<sup>146</sup>

To be sure, Vasconcelos's classics required a level of reading comprehension that could hardly be provided by Huehuetla's schools. It was the primers and readers obtained via the state government, Gabriel Barrios or the municipality's own purchases, that were mostly needed. As elsewhere in the Sierra and throughout the country, schools in Huehuetla possessed textbooks written by Porfirian educators and recommended by both the Puebla executive and the SEP.<sup>147</sup> The reading and writing method authored by Zacateco Angel W. Cabrera in 1888 had disappeared by the 1910s, when inventories show a predominance of Gregorio Torres Quintero's readers. In the 1920s Quintero's books shared the shelves with the reprints of the Porfirian textbooks by Daniel Delgadillo.<sup>148</sup>

Quintero's method followed the simultaneous teaching of reading and writing already adopted during the Porfiriato and introduced to the Sierra by

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<sup>146</sup> AMH, box 56, 'Exp. no. 5. Relativo a la dotación de útiles a las escuelas oficiales. Año de 1925', Presidente Municipal Provisional to Secretario de Educación Pública, Huehuetla 10 July 1925; Huehuetla 29 Oct 1925; Xunapu 26 Nov 1925.

<sup>147</sup> AMH, box 62, Instrucción Pública, Lista de los libros de lectura aprobados por la Junta Directiva de Educación Primaria, Puebla 19 Jan 1921; AMT, box 27, Lista de los libros de texto para las escuelas elementales, sub-elementales y rudimentarias, Puebla 27 Jan 1922; AGEP-SEP-MPE, box 60, 'Exp. 59.1. Zaxapoaxtla', Libros de texto aprobados por la Junta Directiva de Educación Primaria, Puebla 19 Jan 1924. Ernesto Meneses Morales, *Tendencias educativas oficiales en México* (Mexico: CEE-UIA, 1998), vol. I (1821-1911), pp. 656-658 and vol. II (1911-1934), p. 492.

<sup>148</sup> AMH, box 20, Instrucción Pública, 'Cuaderno de justificantes por útiles para las escuelas', Escuela de niñas Hidalgo, 4 April 1906; box 42, Instrucción Pública, 'Lista de útiles existentes en la escuela de niñas de Caxhuacan', 1 June 1917; box 62, Instrucción Pública, 'Inventarios', Escuela de niños de Caxhuacan, 14 May 1921; Escuela de niñas Miguel Hidalgo, Huehuetla 10 May 1921; Chilocoyo 9 May 1921; Escuela de niños, Huehuetla 6 May 1921.

Angel W. Cabrera. However, Quintero controversially reversed the widely approved analytic-synthetic method advanced in the Porfiriato by introducing isolated letters before words, as the old primers of the colonial period and the first half of the nineteenth century had done. He further introduced a phonetic and onomatopoeic system whereby children memorised the sound of each letter by relating it to a familiar sound. This latter method was apparently successful as children learned to read and write very fast. Quintero's guide to teaching reading and writing arrived in Huehuetla as early as it was published in 1906. In subsequent years schools' inventories listed three graded readers by Quintero. Unfortunately we have no details of how teachers might have used these books but the state inspectors who believed in the advantages of Quintero's onomatopoeic method encouraged its introduction.<sup>149</sup> Such recommendations, if followed, might have sped up children's learning to read. However, the method did not address the issue of Indian pupils' reading of Spanish without understanding as identified in Chapter Two, and the problem might have continued.<sup>150</sup> On the other hand, the heightened awareness of language problems, which we have seen among teachers throughout the ex-district of Zacatlán, implied that the occurrence of such practices might decrease after the Revolution. The other author present in Huehuetla's school inventories was Daniel Delgadillo, who, like Quintero, had been a member of the Porfirian educational

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<sup>149</sup> AMZx, box 47-E, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 21. Relativo a la visita practicada a las escuelas oficales del distrito por el inspector C. Profesor Francisco C. Cortés', Zacapoaxtla Feb-March 1910.

<sup>150</sup> María Rodríguez Álvarez, 'Gregorio Torres Quintero, Pedagogo Mexicano que trascendió, 1866-1934'. Paper presented at the *International Standing Conference for the History of Education*, Geneva, 2004. Available at <http://digeset.uco.mx/pedagogia/pdf/mara/GTQ.pdf> (2 Aug 2004).

administration. He published three graded reading books from beginners to intermediate: *Leo y escribo*, *Poco a poco* and *Adelante*.<sup>151</sup> *Adelante* introduced pupils to the reading of simple stories, which were invariably morality tales. Although the book focused on lower-middle class urban sectors, it promoted values such as obedience and hard work that struck a chord with the liberal positivist ethos of many in the Sierra and are still remembered with fondness by some of their users. Although more research on the history of textbooks and especially their use in the classroom is needed, there are signs that these textbooks to some extent fulfilled their role as tools for the standardisation of instruction.<sup>152</sup> Even if Quintero's method had its rival, the two or three types of reading and writing methods available would be reproduced throughout the country. Textbooks additionally forged a common experience among pupils, which could impact on memories for a long time.<sup>153</sup>

The introduction of farming activities in school is a good example of the spread of SEP initiatives through Puebla City and on to the state- and community-

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<sup>151</sup> AMH, box 62, Instrucción Pública, 'Inventarios', Escuela de niños, Huehuetla 6 May 1921; box 52, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 1. Relativo al movimiento de personal docente. 1927', Inventario de la escuela Benito Juárez, Huehuetla 30 Nov 1927; box 73, Instrucción Pública, Inventario de la escuela Vicente Guerrero, Cinco de Mayo 2 Feb 1930; AGESEP-MPE, box 60, file 60.7. 'Junta directiva de Educación Pública. Huehuetla', Inventario de la escuela Benito Juárez, 10 Feb 1925.

<sup>152</sup> In the Mexican historiography of education, there have been a number of studies analysing the content of textbooks since the 1980s but there is only one article, albeit very useful, on the use of books in the classroom. Elsie Rockwell, 'Learning for Life', pp. 1-23.

<sup>153</sup> Interview with Elisa Rivera Lobato, Xochiapulco 16 Feb 2002. Interview with Bulmara García, Puebla 24 Feb 2002. On Quintero and Delgadillo see Mary K. Vaughan, *The State, Education and Social Class*, ch. 7, especially pp. 231-234 for an analysis of Delgadillo's *Adelante*. For the persistence of Porfirian books in the 1930s see Mary K. Vaughan, 'Ideological Changes in Mexican Educational Policy, Programs and Texts (1920-1940)' in Roderic A. Camp, Charles A.

funded schools in the Sierra. Although agricultural practices had been included in the curriculum of a few schools since the Porfiriato, they spread when they became the SEP's pet project. The Puebla state government adopted this policy enthusiastically while communities showed a wide range of responses to it.<sup>154</sup> Following federal guidelines, Puebla's education department and state inspectors promoted the introduction of school plots and animal raising to state-funded schools as well as those sustained with voluntary donations.<sup>155</sup> While in Cuetzalan factionalism prevented the development of education including the introduction of any innovations, Huehuetla's schools by the late 1920s, although often unable to improve the low Porfirian levels of attendance, were developing some farming activities.<sup>156</sup> These flourished in 1929 Caxhuacan where the school was praised for its good results. Indian and non-Indian students cultivated fruits and vegetables, kept bees and saved the proceeds from the sale of produce.<sup>157</sup> The schools in the Indian rancherías of Cinco de Mayo and Xunalpu possessed school

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Hale and Josefina Vázquez (eds.) *Los intelectuales y el poder en México* (México: Colegio de México-UCLA, 1991).

<sup>154</sup> On such responses see Ariadna Acevedo Rodrigo, 'Struggles for Citizenship? Peasant Negotiation of Schooling in the Sierra Norte de Puebla, 1921-1933', *BLAR*, 23:2 (2004), pp. 181-197.

<sup>155</sup> AGEP-SEP-MPE, box 53, file 98, 25 Feb 1925; box 56, file 6, 1925 and box 72, file 66, 4 June 1926.

<sup>156</sup> AMH, box 65, 'Exp. 20. Relativo a visitas a las escuelas por el inspector pedagógico', Huehuetla 27 July 1922; box 62, Presidente Rosendo Cruz to Director Escuela Benito Juárez, Huehuetla 4 March 1926; box 73, Presidencia, 'Informe que rinde el Ayuntamiento de Huehuetla al Secretario General de Gobierno del Estado sobre mejoras materiales y asuntos de más importancia durante 1933-1936', Huehuetla 15 Dec 1936.

<sup>157</sup> AMH, box 59, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 25. Relativo a documentación de exámenes. 1929', Acta y Calificaciones, Caxhuacan 27 Nov 1929.

plots for 'agricultural tasks' since 1925.<sup>158</sup> Embracing the curriculum promoted by the SEP probably favoured these three communities' when they approached the *Secretaría* to become federal in the mid- to late 1930s.<sup>159</sup> As a result, some Huehuetecos were relieved from paying the voluntary donations, although they were still expected to contribute in other ways to the maintenance of schools. For its part, the federal administration expanded its reach.

Teacher training was another federal and state initiative that reached Huehuetla in the 1920s. The state inspector, in collaboration with the local education committee, organised seminars where teachers from Huehuetla and neighbouring Hueytalpan got together to share teaching methods and standardise their practices under the direction of the inspector himself. Whereas the main objective was to provide some training to mostly unqualified teachers, and to unify instruction in the region, the report suggests that they also discussed how to adapt their methods to teach indigenous students. Also, at the state executive's initiative, further training took place in the headtowns, where the boys' school director would instruct the less qualified teachers of the villages as well as

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<sup>158</sup> AMH, box 62, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 22. Relativo a los exámenes generales en las escuelas oficiales, de fin de año escolar. 1925'; box 56, 'Exp. no. 5. Relativo a la dotación de útiles a las escuelas oficiales. Año de 1925', Xunalpu 26 Nov 1925.

<sup>159</sup> The boys' and the girls' schools sustained by donations in Caxhuacan merged and became federal in 1935. The school at Xunalpu became federal in 1936 and there were further petitions to federalise those of Francisco I. Madero and Cinco de Mayo. AHSEP-DGEPET, Estado de Puebla, box 5785, Exp. 17, Faustino Molina Betancourt 17 April 1936 and Miguel Hidalgo Salazar Secretario General de la CCEZ to Secretario de Educación Pública, Puebla 25 Sep 1936. AMH, box 73, Xunalpu 6 Sep 1936.

teaching trainees and assistants.<sup>160</sup> Finally, Huehuetecos were encouraged to attend training courses funded by SEP in Zacatlán.<sup>161</sup>

While teacher training and agricultural instruction in Huehuetla came as a result of the initiative of federal and state policies, other educational activities were started by the town itself (even if state and federal government might then seize upon them to encourage them further). The ubiquitous basketball courts of today's Mexican countryside, testament to the success of the SEP's social action, did not need the initiative and support of a federal teacher.<sup>162</sup> In Huehuetla, before any federal schools opened, local notables including teacher Leopoldo López Ruanova and Totonac Manuel Gaona, petitioned the council in 1927 to establish a basketball court on the west side of the Church. Two clubs, under the names '*Serrano*' and '*Pro-Raza*' had already been formed. The development of sport in Huehuetla was desirable, they argued, because it formed part of the 'social laws and the moral and physical culture of a civilised people' and contributed to the 'virile conservation of the human species'. Requiring little investment, the

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<sup>160</sup> AMH, box 60, Instrucción Pública, Rosendo Cruz and other signatories to C. Teniente Coronel Demetrio Barrios, Huehuetla 12 July 1929; Francisco Trejo to Presidente de la Sub-Junta de Educación, Huehuetla 30 Sep 1929; Rosendo Cruz to Francisco Trejo, Huehuetla 1 Oct 1929.

<sup>161</sup> AMH, box 65, Presidencia, 'Copiador de mensajes telefónicos' Message from Zacatlán, 24 March 1923; Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 23. Relativo a la Escuela Normal Regional en Zacatlán', Zacatlán 25 Nov 1922; box 59, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 10. Relativo a la Escuela Normal Regional de la Cabecera Municipal de Zacatlán. Año de 1923', Zacatlán 11 Dec 1922 and 14 Aug 1923. Baudelio Candanedo, *Zacatlán. Ensayo Histórico* (México: Centro de Estudios Históricos de Puebla, 1979), pp. 68-69.

<sup>162</sup> On federal schools' promotion of sports see Mary K. Vaughan, 'The construction of patriotic festival in Tecamachalco, Puebla. 1900-1946' in W. H. Beezley, Cheryl E. Martin and William E. French (eds.), *Rituals of rule, rituals of resistance. Public celebrations and popular culture in Mexico* (Wilmington: SR Books, 1994), pp. 224-226. On basketball and baseball in the SEP's Rural Teacher Training College in nearby Tlatlauqui in 1932 see AHSEP-ENR, box 72, 'Exp. 1.



municipal president immediately authorised the construction of the basketball court, which received periodic maintenance during the 1930s. With their rhetoric of 'civilisation' and their basketball teams, Huehuetecos would have pleased the agents of the revolutionary state but, having organised everything by themselves, they did not have to thank the government.<sup>163</sup>

Historians have already observed that the cultural and educational project of the revolutionary state was resisted and negotiated by local societies.<sup>164</sup> Taking into account the cases of Cuetzalan and Huehuetla, we could add that well into the 1930s such project had only reached some communities after filtering through state governments and as a series of recommendations or examples to emulate. Huehuetecos had possibly seen basketball courts elsewhere in the Sierra, built after the proposal of federal teachers, and decided to get their own. But it was Huehuetla's population, organised through local, customary forms of fundraising and an impoverished but still functioning municipal government, that paid for the schools and the basketball courts, not the federal government.

The case of the 'voluntary donations' to fund schools neatly exposes both the weaknesses and the strengths of the revolutionary state as well as its

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Escuela Normal Rural de Tlatlauqui, Puebla. 1932', doc. 168-169, Informe del mes de Septiembre de 1932; Programa para las fiestas de la Independencia, Sep 1932.

<sup>163</sup> AMH, box 64, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 32. Relativo a la solicitud de vecinos de este lugar para establecer un campo de deportes', Huehuetla 19 March 1927; box 73, Presidencia, 'Informe que rinde el Ayuntamiento de Huehuetla al Secretario General de Gobierno del Estado sobre mejoras materiales y asuntos de más importancia durante 1933-1936', Huehuetla 15 Dec 1936.

<sup>164</sup> For society's resistance and the state's weakness see Alan Knight's 'Popular Culture and the Revolutionary State in Mexico, 1910-1940', *HAHR*, 74:3 (1994), pp. 393-444 and 'Revolutionary Project, Recalcitrant People: Mexico, 1910-40' in Jaime E. Rodríguez (ed.), *The Revolutionary Process in Mexico: Essays on Political and Social Change, 1880-1940* (Los Angeles: UCLA, 1990). For society's negotiation with the state see Mary K. Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution*.

articulation with local societies. The origin of the school donations was the nineteenth-century Chicontepec tax. After the abolition of head taxes in 1917 neither federal nor state government could fill the vacuum and communities such as Cuetzalan and Huehuetla simply changed the name of the impost and continued collecting it. They were, nonetheless, always aware of the legislative framework. While they might have continued collecting Chicontepec, calling it by the same name or the generic label of 'contribution' during 1911-1917, the term '*donativo voluntario*' came from Puebla's 1919 educational law.<sup>165</sup> The 1919 law considered the donations as a mere complement to funds provided by state and municipal treasuries, but because of the poverty of the latter, communities readily seized upon the donations, making them into the principal form of raising revenue for the school. From 1919 Gabriel Barrios encouraged the collection of such fees using the term contained in the legislation. Soon after, the state government itself, despite plans to fund schools from the state treasury, enthusiastically encouraged the voluntary donations and listed the schools thus funded in the documents and reports of its incipient but growing educational bureaucracy. At the same time, partly inspired by the federal government's initiatives, it supervised and influenced the curriculum and teaching practices of such schools. With a very small investment, the state government, to some extent, appropriated the communities' educational efforts.<sup>166</sup>

Finally, in raising the funds, Totonac authorities in Huehuetla played a crucial role. That they continued to harness the support of the population to a

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<sup>165</sup> Ley de Educación Primaria para las Escuelas del Estado de 4 de febrero de 1919, cap. VII, art. 124.

<sup>166</sup> AGEPEP-MPE, box 48, 'Exp. 112. JDEP. Cuadros relativos a estadística que remiten los inspectores foráneos', Teziutlán 5 Jan 1925 and Zacatlán 22 March 1925.

sufficient extent to sustain schools is a testimony to the strength of local society. That the Totonac caciques did so even though they were clearly losing power to non-Indians with an ever growing and more numerous presence in government, is a testament to the success of a predominantly mestizo domination in Huehuetla, which would only be transformed, and become more open to Totonacs, in the latter part of the twentieth century. The strength of the post-revolutionary party-state from the 1930s lay in its capacity to attract the dominant faction in Huehuetla, whatever its class or ethnic composition.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> On mestizo domination in Huehuetla, and the hegemony of the PRI until the 1980s, see J.J. Torres, *Las luchas indias por el poder local*.

## Conclusions

### The Schools

During 1875-1930, the municipalities of the Sierra Norte de Puebla suffered the erosion of local autonomy at the hands of military, fiscal and political centralisation. In Cuetzalan and Huehuetla, this was accompanied by the waning of Indian caciques' political influence as the balance of power inside and outside the *Ayuntamientos* tilted in favour of mestizos (including acculturated Indians). The key to this latter process is a complex amalgam of economic and political domination built upon the near-monopoly of commerce as well as control of the administration and links with higher authorities, a phenomenon that has been studied by historians and anthropologists.<sup>1</sup> This thesis has argued additionally that the myriad schools sustained by the Sierra population, although acting as symbols of Indian pueblos' autonomous status and proof of their civilisation before the higher authorities, ultimately aided this process of Indian domination by mestizos.

As recent work on the 1750-1821 period has shown, schools had been sustained not only by the Church but by the Indian pueblos' community funds (*cajas de comunidad*). Even before Independence, schools were the object of pueblos' concern and their existence was seen as demonstrating good

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<sup>1</sup> Guy Thomson with David LaFrance, *Patriotism*; Pierre Durand, *Nanacatlán*; Luisa Paré, 'Inter-Ethnic and Class Relations (Sierra Norte Region, State of Puebla)' in John Rex (ed.) *Race and Class in Post-colonial Society: A Study of Ethnic Group Relations in the English-speaking Caribbean, Bolivia, Chile and Mexico* (Paris: UNESCO, 1977).

government.<sup>2</sup> After Independence, successive Mexican governments took it upon themselves to organise public instruction. In the second half of the nineteenth century, liberals, including the Sierra leaders, saw secular schools as a key instrument in fighting the Church's influence and invested education with an almost miraculous capacity to build a modern Mexico. Municipal governments accordingly made sure that they had at least one boys' school in their *cabecera*, as did the *pueblos sujetos*. In the Sierra Norte de Puebla this was made possible through the locally-controlled Chicontepec tax, which was punctually paid throughout the Porfiriato. No self-respecting pueblo or *villa* could pass without a school. Some of the smaller villages and hamlets also opened their own, often as part of their process to upgrade their administrative status to that of pueblo.

The existence of such schools, however, was threatened by the 1910 Revolution. After 1914, the breakdown of political order in the Sierra brought widespread resistance to taxes, followed by the revolutionary government's decision to abolish head taxes, including those which had sustained the Sierra schools for almost a century.<sup>3</sup> However, during the 1920s, and in spite of the economic crisis brought by the armed conflict, communities managed to organise themselves to fund schools through 'voluntary donations' which were in effect a continuation of the Chicontepec tax after its abolition. The organisation of such

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<sup>2</sup> Dorothy Tanck de Estrada, *Pueblos de indios y educación*.

<sup>3</sup> The existence of head taxes in Puebla was no exception. At the beginning of 1917 the states of Chiapas, Guerrero, Hidalgo, México and Tlaxcala all collected head taxes, and Campeche, Oaxaca and Tabasco had only recently abolished them. For village schools sustained by head taxes in Guerrero, Hidalgo and Tlaxcala see Peter Guardino, 'Barbarism or Republican Law', p. 206; Frans J. Schryer, *Ethnicity and Class Conflict*, p. 96 and Yvette Nelen, 'Summary', p. 345. On head taxes see 'Proyecto de Ley de Hacienda propuesto como modelo para la unificación de las Leyes Fiscales de los Estados', México 3 Jan 1917, *POEP*, Sección de Leyes del Gobierno General, Jan-Aug 1917

form of school funding is both a testament to the strength of Sierra communities (often aided by Nahua cacique Gabriel Barrios) to recompose the social fabric damaged by the revolution, and proof of the state and federal governments' incapacity to provide a fiscal system capable of funding public education in place of the abolished head taxes. Finally, it was evidence of the importance conferred upon schools by both authorities and the population, and of their political role as a focus of reconstruction and a symbol of status and pride.

Thus the provision of public instruction fulfilled an important political function but its educational role was less obvious. When SEP officials Moisés Sáenz and Narciso Bassols visited the Sierra in the late 1920s and early 1930s, they found a majority Indian-monolingual population who, at best, could sign their names.<sup>4</sup> Some blame could be put on the Revolution which destroyed the tax system that sustained the uninterrupted running of schools in the Porfiriato. Yet this thesis has shown that there was no pre-1911 'golden age' in which education had been more effective. It is tempting to conclude that these schools were merely paying lip service to the respective projects of the liberal and the revolutionary state, intended, at best, to educate a tiny non-Indian minority who went on to become public employees or took municipal office. However, the fact that pueblos made great efforts to sustain their schools, giving unpaid labour for the construction and maintenance of school buildings and paying school taxes to fund teachers' salaries, warns us against underestimating the importance of the school in the community.

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<sup>4</sup> In 1930 the literacy rates in Cuetzalan and Huehuetla were 16 and 13 per cent respectively. *Sexto Censo de la Población*. Moisés Sáenz, *Escuelas federales en la Sierra de Puebla*; Narciso Bassols, 'Declaraciones sobre la jira a la Sierra Norte de Puebla.

Taking a close look at schools in Nahua Cuetzalan and Totonac Huehuetla during 1875-1930, this thesis has sought an explanation of the results observed by Sáenz and Bassols. The first and foremost cause of the failure of schools to spread literacy and the Spanish language was their very low attendance and the short period children spent in school. This is in turn explained by economic and cultural factors, which have already been addressed by historians and social scientists, namely, rural societies' limited demand for literacy and knowledge of the Spanish language. A few bilingual literate people could serve the needs of such communities. This is true for the municipalities of the Sierra. Yet, attending the criterion that these schools were there to educate a minority, and after describing how most parents avoided sending their children to school, often with the connivance of the local authorities, this thesis has shown that schools were much better equipped to educate mestizos than to educate Indians. This happened because Indian pupils did not speak Spanish and the school did nothing to address this issue.

That the schools of the Porfirian state ignored the language problem, even after positivism dulled the radical liberalism of the previous generation, is a testament to the strength of liberal faith in the benefits of treating all the inhabitants of the country as equals. Putting emphasis on equality, liberals were blind to the linguistic diversity of Mexico or, more specifically, to the problems such diversity could pose to their project of national integration, including public instruction. Ultimately, in their Liberal emphasis on equality and their Republican reluctance to address heterogeneity (the latter a typical concern of Nationalist

thought that would only spread after the revolution),<sup>5</sup> nineteenth-century intellectuals in Mexico City as in Zacatlán, unwittingly hindered the expansion of literacy and the national language, thus obstructing the national integration they desired. When positivists argued that the existing schools were inadequate for Indian rural Mexico, they pointed to key issues such as the limited demand for literacy in the countryside and the fact that much of the Indian population was monolingual. However, in pointing out these problems, Porfirian positivists such as Francisco Cosmes concluded that Indians were irredeemable and European immigration rather than Indian education was the key to the country's progress. Their arguments were ignored by liberals such as Altamirano or Sierra because of their racist overtones. As a result of this, liberal belief in treating peoples equally persisted in the face of language difficulties. The minimally educated teachers of Cuetzalan and Huehuetla were left to their own devices with uninspiring results.

The Revolution brought a clear shift in educational programmes. Yet the language problem observed in this thesis for the period 1875-1930 was only partially addressed. After 1910 liberal republican patriotism had given way to a nationalism which saw heterogeneity as a problem and sought to address it: Indians became a problem for the project of nation-building. *Indigenismo* emerged precisely as a critique of the liberal experience, pointing to the need to create social policies and mechanisms of national integration specific to the needs of indigenous peoples.<sup>6</sup> In principle this would mean a more appropriate education for Indian children than the Spanish-only programmes of the liberal educational

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<sup>5</sup> Charles A. Hale, *Mexican Liberalism in the Age of Mora*, pp. 218-219, 22, 238, 246; Charles A. Hale, *The transformation of liberalism*; David Brading, 'Liberal Patriotism and the Mexican Reforma'.

<sup>6</sup> Alan Knight, 'Racism, Revolution, and *Indigenismo*'; David Brading, 'Manuel Gamio'.



policies. Indeed, as was seen for Zacatlán, teachers began to discuss the specific needs of Nahua and Totonac pupils. As regards language, however, the primary concern of post-revolutionary teachers, intellectuals and state officials was the country's linguistic unification through the spread of Spanish.<sup>7</sup> For this purpose, during the 1920s educationalists leaned in favour of a programme of direct hispanicisation (*castellanización directa*) which, although recognising the need to teach Spanish before any other subjects were introduced, did not address problems such as those found in the schools studied in this thesis, and had shown its limitations by the beginning of the 1930s. Disappointed with the inadequate results of schools in indigenous areas, including the Sierra Norte de Puebla, and after seeing the results of the bilingual education implemented by Protestant missionary William C. Townsend in Guatemala, in 1933 Moisés Sáenz invited Townsend to implement a bilingual programme in México. This by no means meant widespread implementation of bilingual education, neither did it provide a definitive solution to the teaching of language and literacy. But it was the beginning of an education which would be more respectful of language diversity and often more effective than the Spanish-only programmes.<sup>8</sup>

## The State

Let me finish with a reflection on the state, as seen from the perspective of Cuetzalan's and Huehuetla's schools. Mexican post-revisionist historiography has underlined that the state that emerged from the revolutionary conflict was not the

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<sup>7</sup> Manuel Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, pp. 7-9, 159-161, 183. Manuel Gamio, 'Hacia un México Nuevo' in Manuel Gamio, *Antología* (Mexico: UNAM, 1975), pp. 132-134.

<sup>8</sup> Moisés Sáenz, *Carapán*. Gloria Bravo Ahuja, *La enseñanza del español*, pp. 96-98.

all-powerful tool of the winning faction but had to a great extent to strike alliances with different groups, to incorporate demands from the population, and to face a great deal of resistance to its modernising project. The history of education has already observed that, in its weakness, the state had to negotiate its projects with society. By looking at two municipalities in the Sierra Norte de Puebla, I found the state was even weaker than that. In the cases here studied it was not even capable of reaching its target population, let alone imposing its policies on it.

On the other hand, this thesis has also found that the Revolution, through the violence of the 1910s, and the legislation and policies of the 1920s, impoverished local societies. The armed conflict brought destruction and economic crisis. The emerging post-revolutionary state, within a broad policy of fiscal centralisation, abolished head taxes that fed state and municipal coffers, and sustained municipal education in the Porfiriato. The *Ayuntamiento* further lost resources to the revolutionary government's policy of agrarian reform. When the 1917 Constitution recognised collective property, in the form of the *ejido*, its administration would no longer be granted to the *Ayuntamiento*, but to a new, independent body with a direct link to the federal government: the *ejido* committee. In sum, building upon the nineteenth-century *desamortización*, the Revolution stripped the *Ayuntamiento* of revenue and land. In doing so, it empowered itself at the expense of the lower levels of government. This was, indeed, a sure base upon which to build a stronger state. Yet such institutional and political processes occurring at the local level remain largely unstudied.

## **Appendix One**

### **Indian and Non-Indian Surnames in Porfirian Huehuetla and Spanish Speakers in 1910 Huehuetla**

**List 1**

**Indian and non-Indian Sumames in Huehuetla during the Porfiriato**

**Non-Indian Sumames**

Arroyo	Jiménez
Becerra	Lobato
Calleja	López
Cárcamo	Mora
Castañeda	Pastrana
Castro	Portilla
Cortés	Rivera
Florenz	Ruanova
Gómez	Torres
Guardian	
Hernández	
Herrera	

**Totonac Sumames**

Aparicio	Olmos
Aquino	Papián
Cano	Peralta
Castañeda	Pérez
Cruz	Ramírez
Díaz	Ramos
D'Olmos	Rodríguez
Domingo	Salas
Dorantes	Salazar
Espinosa	Sánchez
Gaona	Santiago
García	Sarmiento
Gómez	Sotero
Grande	Vázquez
Guzmán	Vega
Hernández	Zepeda
Jacobo	
Jiménez	
Juárez	
López	
Luna	
Márquez	
Méndez	

## List 2

## Spanish Speakers in 1910 Huehuetla as Reported by Local Authorities

Name	Born	Age in 1910
Arroyo, Jesús	1890	20
Arroyo, José María	1889	21
Arroyo, Juan	1873	37
Arroyo, Ramón	1881	29
Baños, Braulio	1869	41
Baños, Enrique	1883	27
Barrientos, Antonio	1875	35
Becerra Jr, Camilo	1888	22
Becerra, Camilo	1850	60
Becerra, David	1875	35
Becerra, Enrique	1892	18
Becemil, Loreto	1889	21
Becemil, Manuel	1870	40
Becemil, Pedro	1881	29
Beltrán, José María	1880	30
Bonilla, Daniel	1878	32
Bonilla, Eustoquio	1867	43
Bonilla, José María	1872	38
Bonilla, Mariano	1884	26
Cabrera, Enrique	1889	21
Cabrera, Félix	1889	21
Cabrera, Jesús	1847	63
Cabrera, Lorenzo	1881	29
Cabrera, Ponciano	1871	39
Cabrera, Victor	1887	23
Cándido, Tomás	1885	25
Cano, Agustín	1870	40
Cárcamo, Francisco	1873	37
Cárcamo, Manuel	1877	33
Carmona, Juan	1872	38
Carmona, Manuel	1879	31
Carmona, Secundino	1885	25
Castillo, José	1879	31
Cortés, Manuel H.	1865	45
Cortés, Sacramento	1881	29
Cruz, Espiridión	1887	23
Cruz, Florencio	1877	33
Cruz, Ignacio	1886	24
Cruz, José	1881	29
Cruz, José	1873	37
Cruz, Rafael	1887	23
Cruz, Rosendo	1869	41
Cuevas, Filemón	1873	37

de Aquino Trinidad	1879	31
de la Pedraja, Ramón	1879	31
del Castillo, Alfonso	1877	33
Evangelio, Alberto	1889	21
Evangelio, Antonio	1889	21
Evangelio, Francisco	1852	58
Evangelio, Manuel	1886	24
Francisco, Miguel	1860	50
García, Antonio	1880	30
Gómez, Delfino	1886	24
Gomez, Rafael	1880	30
González, Alfonso	1891	19
González, Dolores	1886	24
González, Emilio	1871	39
González, Esteban	1877	33
González, Federico	1860	50
González, Fidel	1889	21
Guevara, Trinidad	1874	38
Guzmán , Andrés	1870	40
Guzmán, Pedro	1870	40
Hernández, Antonio	1870	40
Hernández, Reinaldo	1889	21
Hernández, Willebaldo	1887	23
Herrero, Emilio	1879	31
Huerta, José de la Luz	1878	32
Islas, Miguel	1875	35
Juárez, Camilo	1881	29
Juárez, Manuel	1883	27
Lemus, Jesús	1874	38
Limón, Aurelio	1879	31
Lobato Gutiérrez, Miguel	1859	51
Lobato Reyes, Miguel	1865	45
Lobato, Ignacio	1892	18
Lobato, Pedro	1855	55
Lobato, Prudencio	1889	21
Lobato, Soledad G. Vda. de	1843	67
López A., Miguel	1874	38
López, Anastasio	1869	41
López, Antonio	1889	21
López, Juan	1885	25
López, Mariano	1878	32
López, Peocadio	1875	35
López, Silvestre	1888	22
Lozada, Vicente	1883	27
Luna, Jesús	1868	42

Mancilla, Antonio	1879	31
Manzano, Joaquín	1887	23
Manzano, Marcos	1885	25
Martínez, Francisco	1883	27
Martínez, Pascual	1878	32
Martínez, Pascual	1843	67
Mejía, Belisario	1889	21
Mejía, Leonor L. Vda. de	1853	57
Mejía, Luis	1885	25
Manzano, Manuel	1874	36
Mora, Bonifacio	1880	30
Mora, Enrique	1884	26
Mora, Gabino	1881	29
Mora, Ignacia L. Vda. de	1851	59
Mora, Leopoldo	1883	27
Mora, Manuel	1871	39
Mora, Porfirio	1883	27
Mora, Ramón	1876	34
Morales, Ignacio	1879	31
Morales, Lauro	1888	22
Morales, Leopoldo	1890	20
Morales, Mauro	1889	21
Morales, Trinidad	1882	28
Moreno, Alfonso	1888	22
Olivarez, Felipe	1875	35
Olivarez, Joaquín	1873	37
Olivarez, José	1888	22
Ordoñez, Lorenzo	1865	45
Ortuño, Onofre	1875	35
Pérez, Baldomero	1886	24
Pérez, Hermilo	1884	26
Pérez, Ignacio	1888	22
Portillo, Antonio	1876	34
Portillo, Felipe	1889	21
Portillo, Hermelindo	1870	40
Portillo, Jesús	1873	37
Portillo, José	1888	22
Portillo, Juan	1880	30
Ramos, Modesto	1888	22
Rivera, Antonio	1879	31
Rivera, Benito	1884	26
Rivera, Donato	1874	36
Rivera, Enrique	1888	22
Rivera, Felipe	1872	38
Rivera, Guadalupe	1876	34

Rivera, Isidoro	1887	23
Rivera, Rafael	1889	21
Rodríguez E., Leopoldo	1871	39
Rodríguez, Carmen P. Vda. de	1878	32
Ronquillo, Antonio	1878	32
Ronquillo, Romualdo	1883	27
Rosendo, José	1866	44
Ruano, José	1888	22
Ruiz, Antonio	1878	32
Salazar, Eliseo	1872	38
Sánchez, Antonio	1877	33
Sánchez, Augusto	1888	22
Sánchez, Luis	1890	20
Sánchez, Manuel	1865	45
Santiago, José	1891	19
Soto, Rafael	1884	26
Tapia, Romualdo	1873	37
Tirado, Miguel	1883	27
Valentín, Leonardo	1886	24
Valentín, Miguel	1865	45
Vargas, Domingo	1878	32
Vázquez, Agustín	1877	33
Velázquez, Andrés	1874	36
Velázquez, Carmen	1880	30
Velázquez, Ramón	1869	41
Victoriano, José	1882	28
Zamora, Antonio	1877	33



## List 3

## Spanish Speakers in 1910 Caxhuacan as Reported by Local Authorities

Name	Born	Age in 1910
Bonilla, Bartolo	1890	20
Bonilla, Catarina R. Vda. de	1860	50
Castañeda, Agripino	1889	21
Castañeda, Crescencio	1868	42
Castañeda, Eleuterio	1882	28
Castañeda, Frumencio	1875	35
Castañeda, Miguel	1880	30
Castañeda, Virginia L. Vda. de	1865	45
Domínguez, Filogonio	1888	22
García, Evaristo	1855	55
García, Francisco	1890	20
García, Vicente	1882	28
González, Félix	1862	48
Hernández, Esteban	1835	75
Hernández, Miguel	1872	38
Jacobo, Manuel	1880	30
Juárez, Navor	1888	22
Monterrubio, Leopoldo L.	1884	26
Nava, Abraham	1870	40
Nava, Antonio	1888	22
Nava, Baudelio	1875	35
Nava, Francisco D.	1862	48
Nava, Isauro	1868	42
Nava, Juan	1861	49
Nava, Julian	1884	26
Párraga, Adolfo	1862	48
Párraga, Romulo	1872	38
Rodríguez, José	1875	35
Ruano, Daniel	1888	22
Toral, Francisco	1880	30
Varela, Miguel	1886	24
Vázquez, Diego L.	1873	37
Vázquez, Isidoro	1887	23

## **Sources for Appendix One**

### **Sources for List 1**

**Interview with Manuel Lecona, Puebla 20 April 2002.**

**AMH, box 2, Presidencia, 'Padrón de los ciudadanos rebajados de Huehuetla' Huehuetla 29 Jan 1870, and 'Padrón General que contiene el censo de habitantes de este pueblo de Huehuetla' Huehuetla 10 Feb 1875; box 4, Presidencia, 'Expediente que contiene las noticias originales del movimiento civil de esta municipalidad, por los meses de enero a julio del año de 1887', Huehuetla Aug 1887; box 14, Presidencia, 'Expediente que contiene las noticias mensuales de nacimientos ocurridos en la municipalidad en los meses de enero a diciembre del año 1892', Huehuetla Dec 1892.**

### **Source for Lists 2 and 3**

**AMH, box 45, Presidencia, 'Exp. no. 29. Relativo a la lista nominal de las personas residentes en esta municipalidad que hablan el idioma Castellano', Huehuetla, 26 Dec 1910**

## **Appendix Two**

### **Population and School Figures for Cuetzalan during the Porfiriato**

Table 1 <sup>1</sup>

Total Population in the Municipality of Cuetzalan, 1871-1910

Localities	Category	Population			
		1871	1899	1900	1910
Cuetzalan (municipal seat)	Villa	4101	5184	6371	6994
San Miguel Tzinacapan	Pueblo	1289	1843	1809	1862
San Andrés Tzicuilan	Pueblo	1347	1938	2417	1689
Santiago Yancuitlalpan	Pueblo	519	935	702	760
Xocoyolo	Pueblo	543	845	756	878
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7799</b>	<b>9745</b>	<b>12055</b>	<b>12183</b>

Table 2

School-Age Population as Reported by Local Authorities.

Municipality of Cuetzalan, 1881-1905

Year	Male	Female	Total
1881	689	568	1257
1884	709	547	1256
1888	687	406	1093
1892	646	511	1157
1899	796	604	1400
1905	613	550	1163

<sup>1</sup> This table is also included in the body of Chapter Two

**Tables 3, 4 and 5**  
**Comparison between the 1899 Local School Census**  
**and Figures in the 1900 National Census**

**Table 3**  
**School-Age Population in the Municipality of Cuetzalan**  
**as Calculated from Figures in the 1900 National Census**

<b>Localities</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Cuetzalan	847	582	1429
San Miguel Tzinacapan	236	168	404
Other localities	514	750	870
<b>Municipal Total</b>	<b>1597</b>	<b>1106</b>	<b>2703</b>

**Table 4**  
**School-Age Population in the Municipality of Cuetzalan**  
**as Reported by Local Authorities in 1899**  
**(and Total Percentage in Relation to the 1900 National Census)**

<b>Localities</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Cuetzalan	323	257	580	41
San Miguel Tzinacapan	180	92	272	67
Other localities	293	255	548	63
<b>Municipal Total</b>	<b>796</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>1400</b>	<b>52</b>

**Table 5**  
**Number of Children 'Hidden' from the Local Census**  
**or Difference between the National Census (Table 3) and the Local Census (Table 4)**

<b>Localities</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Cuetzalan	524	325	849
San Miguel Tzinacapan	56	76	132
Other localities	221	495	322
<b>Municipal Total</b>	<b>801</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>1303</b>

Table 6  
School Census and Registration  
as Reported by Local Authorities, 1881-1905  
(Figures Referred to in Chapter Two Are in Bold)

	1881	1888	1892	1905	Average
<b>Male</b>					
Census	689	607	646	580	631
Registration	310	325	317	245	299
Percentage	45	54	49	42	47
<b>Female</b>					
Census	568	406	511	518	501
Registration	42	94	57	136	82
Percentage	7	23	11	26	17
<b>Total</b>					
Census	1257	1013	1157	1098	1131
Registration	352	419	374	381	382
Percentage	28	41	32	35	34

**Table 7**  
**The Boys' School in Cuetzalan**

	Census	Registration	Attendance	Attendance Percentage
Average 1876		30		
Average 1877			107	
Feb 1879		64		
Sep 1881	401	148		
Oct 1884	363			
June 1885				
August 1885		248		
April to Jun 1887		160	130	81
Average 1888	232	83	75	90
Feb 1891		92	86	93
Jan 1892	287			
Nov 1892	480	85	75	88
Feb 1893		76	70	92
May 1899	323	51	25	49
Oct. 1900	298	65	45	69
Average 1904	227	54	30	56
Average 1905	247	43	20	47
Feb. 1907		81	56	69
<b>Total Average</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>61</b>

**Table 8**  
**The Boys' School in the pueblo of San Miguel Tzinacapan**

	Census	Registration	Attendance	Attendance Percentage
Average 1876		44		
Average 1877			49	
Feb 1879		53		
Sep 1881	109	72		
Oct 1884	144	130		
June 1885		140	120	86
August 1885		127	120	94
April to Jun 1887		102	95	93
Average 1888	136	98	90	92
Jan 1892	163			
Nov 1892	121	121	110	91
Feb 1893	116	116	110	95
June 1895		85	75	88
August 1895		92	80	87
Jan 1896		77	77	100
Sep 1896		109	100	92
May 1899	180	56	47	84
Oct. 1900	104	67	54	81
Average 1904	84	69	62	90
Average 1905	100	48	24	50
Feb. 1908		72	72	100
June. 1908		85	80	94
<b>Total Average</b>		<b>88</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>89</b>

**Table 9**  
**The Boys' School in the pueblo of San Andrés Tzicuilan**

	Census	Registration	Attendance	Attendance Percentage
June 1877	49		9	
Sep 1881	94	53		
Oct 1884	92	77		
June 1885		46	36	78
Aug 1885		40	32	80
April to Jun 1887		30	27	90
Average 1888	111	30	22	73
Jan 1892	96			
Nov 1892	60	18	14	78
Feb 1893	40	19	15	79
Jan 1896		34	26	76
May 1899	165			
Feb. 1900		17	10	59
Average 1904	155	35	27	77
Average 1905	120	42	28	67
Feb to July 1907		32	26	81
Feb. 1908		31	21	68
<b>Total Average</b>		<b>36</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>76</b>

**Table 10**  
**The Boys' School in barrio of Zacatipan (San Andrés Tzicuilan)**

	Census	Registration	Attendance	Attendance Percentage
Aug 1885		55	50	91
April to Jun 1887		30	26	87
Average 1888	80	32	22	69
Nov 1892	39	26	22	85
Feb 1893	40	18	15	83
Jan 1896		13	10	77
Feb. 1900		15	12	80
Average 1904	33	21	14	67
Average 1905	33	17	11	65
Feb. 1907		9		
<b>Total Average</b>		<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>86</b>



## Notes and Sources for Appendix Two

### Note for Table 3

The 1900 national census provides population figures for the age categories 6-10 and 11-15. In order to calculate the male population aged 6-14 and the female population aged 6-12, I worked under the assumption that the distribution of the population for each age in the 6-10 and the 11-15 category was even.

### Sources

\* *Censo General de la República Mexicana verificado el 28 de octubre de 1900. Estado de Puebla* (México: Secretaría de Fomento, 1902).

\* Guy Thomson, 'Agrarian Conflict in the Municipality of Cuetzalan (Sierra de Puebla): The Rise and Fall of "Pala" Agustín Dieguillo, 1861-1894', *HAHR*, 71:2 (1991), p. 218.

\* Population and School figures from Archivo Municipal de Cuetzalan, AMC:

Box 7, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia que sobre establecimientos de educación primaria ha pedido el superior gobierno del estado en circular de fecha 12 de Mayo', Cuetzalan 4 junio 1877.

Box 9, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 20. Contiene una circular del superior gobierno del estado en la que pide una noticia respecto de la apertura de escuelas', Feb 1879.

Box 12, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 102. Por disposición del gobierno del estado se formarán padrones de los niños de ambos sexos que concurren a los establecimientos de instrucción primaria así como de los que no concurren', Francisco Agustín Dieguillo, Cuetzalan 5 Oct 1881.

Box 15, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 118. Contiene un dictamen relativo al aseguramiento de los locales que se ocupan para escuela de niños y niñas y para palacio municipal', Nov-Dec 1882

Box 17, Tesorería, 'Estado de corte de caja practicado en esta oficina por los ingresos y egresos por el ramo de Instrucción Pública', Cuetzalan 31 Dec 1883.

Box 19, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia de los niños que reciben instrucción en esta municipalidad', J.M. Calderón, Cuetzalan 21 Oct 1884.

Box 21, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 53. El inspector de escuelas del distrito reclama una noticia de los niños y niñas que reciben instrucción', Francisco Agustín Dieguillo, Cuetzalan 21 April 1885; 'Noticia de Instrucción Pública rudimental y primaria' Francisco Agustín Dieguillo, Cuetzalan 13 June 1885, and 'Noticia formada en la Secretaría del Ayuntamiento de Cuetzalan en cumplimiento de lo preceptuado en la circular XXIII de la Secretaría de Fomento', Francisco Agustín Dieguillo, Cuetzalan 4 Aug 1885.

Box 25, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 15. Relativo a la circular no. LII a la Jefatura Política relativa a la boleta de estadística de instrucción pública', July 1887.

Box 27, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 6. La Presidencia Municipal de Cuetzalan remite un cuestionario al Colegio del Estado con motivo de la Exposición Internacional de París', Escuela Municipal Rayón en Tzicuilan', 23 July 1888 and 'Noticia que rinde esta oficina del número de niños y niñas de este pueblo a quienes es obligatoria la instrucción en cumplimiento de la circular 347 expedida en la sala capitular de Cuetzalan', 6 June 1888; box 30, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 25. Asunto relativo al estado que guardó la instrucción primaria en esta municipalidad el año próximo pasado', Cuetzalan 18 June 1889, Aparicio Calderón.

Box 37, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 31. Expediente relativo a las actas de visitas de las escuelas públicas de la municipalidad', 17 Feb 1891.

Box 39, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 5. Relativo a los padrones de los niños de ambos sexos a quienes el presente año les obliga la instrucción primaria', Cuetzalan 4 enero 1892 and 'Noticia sobre instrucción primaria de esta municipalidad correspondiente al mes de Noviembre de 1892', Dec 1892.

Box 42, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia sobre instrucción primaria de esta municipalidad correspondiente al mes de Febrero de 1893', March 1893.

Box 50, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia de Instrucción pública correspondiente al mes de la fecha que se rinde a la Jefatura Política', Aparicio Calderón, Cuetzalan 31 June 1895 and 'Noticia de Instrucción pública correspondiente al mes de la fecha que se rinde a la Jefatura Política', Aparicio Calderón, Cuetzalan 31 Aug 1895.

Box 54, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 22. Relativo a las visitas que practican los regidores a las escuelas públicas del municipio', 25 Jan 1896; box 55, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia de

Instrucción Pública correspondiente al mes de la fecha', Aparicio Calderón, Cuetzalan 31 August 1896; 'Noticia de Instrucción Pública correspondiente al mes de la fecha', Aparicio Calderón, Cuetzalan 31 August 1896 and 'Exp. no. 118. Relativo a las noticias de escuelas particulares que pidió la Jefatura Política', Cuetzalan 30 Sep 1896.

Box 63, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 18. Relativo a los reconocimientos practicados a las escuelas públicas del municipio', April-June 1898 and 'Actas de las visitas de los regidores a las escuelas', Escuela Juárez 1 July 1898, Escuela Aldama de Yancuitatipan 6 July 1898, Escuela Rayón and Escuela Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez 5 Aug 1898.

Box 67, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 22. Relativo a que el inspector Francisco Cortés comenzó a practicar su visita a las escuelas públicas del distrito', 'Noticia del número de habitantes del municipio y niños a quienes obliga la instrucción', Jan-March 1899 and 'Exp. no. 32. Relativo a los informes que dio el visitador Francisco Cortés, al practicar su visita a las escuelas públicas del municipio', May 1899.

Box 70, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 15. Expediente de las actas de visita que practican los Regidores a las escuelas públicas del municipio', 12 Feb 1900 and box 71, 'Exp. no. 31. Relativo a los informes que el inspector Felipe Franco dió de las visitas que practicó a las escuelas de este municipio', 14 Oct 1900.

Box 85, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 32. Listas de faltas de asistencia a las escuelas municipales y estados del movimiento mensual de los mismos planteles', 20 Jan 1904

Box 87, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia estadística escolar referente a los años 1876 y 1903', Cuetzalan 25 Feb 1904.

Box 92, 'Exp. no. 34. Relativo a datos de estadística escolar correspondientes al año anterior, de las escuelas oficiales particulares de ambos sexos', 9 Jan 1905.

Box 93, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 146. Relativo a datos de estadística escolar del presente año', 19 Nov 1905.

Box 103, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 41. Actas de Visitas Escolares', Regidor Amado Mora, Feb-Oct 1907 and 'Exp. no. 43. Relativo a la visita que practicó a las escuelas oficiales del municipio el inspector de instrucción C. Felipe Franco', March 1907.

Box 110, Instrucción Pública, 'Exp. no. 67. Actas de visitas escolares', 7 Feb 1908.

Box 123, Presidencia, 'Datos que se ministran al profesor C. Francisco Cortés, Inspector de Instrucción', Cuetzalan 13 April 1910.

## **Appendix Three**

### **School Figures**

**for**

**Huehuetla during the Porfiriato and the Revolution**

**Note for all School Figures:**

**Average figures are provided to facilitate reading  
but they must be taken as a rough indication of registration and attendance  
rather than a precise measurement since records of school figures are incomplete**

**Table 1**  
**Average Attendance per Decade in Huehuetla,**  
**Municipal Seat compared to Villages, 1880s-1920s**

	<b>Municipal seat</b>			<b>Pueblo, Barrio and Rancherías</b>		
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1880s</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>1890s</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>1900s</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>1910s</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>1920s</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>131</b>

Table 2  
The Boys' School in Huehuetla

	Census	Registration	Attendance
Dec 1880		60	38
Jan 1881		46	
July 1881		69	
Oct 1881		72	
May 1884		69	
Jan-July 1885	242	67	55
Aug 1886		72	
Jan-April 1888	208	91	85
<b>Average 1880s</b>		68	59
Jan-March 1893	190	100	90
Dec 1896		93	55
Sep 1898		33	
Feb 1899	300	62	60
Sep 1899		44	40
<b>Average 1890s</b>		68	61
Feb. 1901		75	70
Jan. 1902		61	45
May. 1902		53	31
Oct. 1902		42	30
Dec. 1903		60	60
Feb. 1904	357	61	46
March. 1905		62	32
July-Aug 1905		58	31
Nov. 1905		58	39
Feb. 1906		61	46
June. 1907		52	32
July. 1907		61	40
Dec. 1908		82	75
Sep. 1909		86	70
<b>Average 1900s</b>		62	46
Jan. 1910			39
Feb. 1910			46
March. 1910			50
April. 1910			56
May. 1910			55
June. 1910			53
July. 1910			45
Aug. 1910			41
Sep. 1910			32
Oct. 1910			39
Nov. 1910			36
<b>Average 1910</b>			45
<b>Average 1880-1910</b>		65	53

	Census	Registration	Attendance
Jan 1911		70	36
Feb 1911		25	20
April 1911		31	
May 1911		34	18
Feb 1912			42
March 1913		58	
Feb 1915		18	13
June 1915		44	37
<b>Average 1910s</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>28</b>
Average 1920	150	35	23
March. 1921		117	
Aug. 1921		117	70
Feb. 1922		63	53
Mar. 1922		72	58
April. 1922		76	56
May. 1922		73	48
June. 1922		70	43
July. 1922		76	55
Aug. 1922		72	51
Sep. 1922		72	52
Oct. 1922		62	50
Nov. 1922		58	48
June. 1925		67	50
March. 1927		42	42
July. 1927		54	52
Aug. 1927		59	56
Sep. 1927		150	115
Oct. 1927		153	97
Nov. 1927		59	54
June. 1929		44	34
<b>Average 1920s</b>		<b>74</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Average 1911-1929</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>42</b>



Table 3  
The Girls' School in Huehuetla

	Census	Registration	Attendance
May 1884		33	
Jan-July 1885	152	37	30
August 1886		49	
Jan-April 1888	149	50	42
1889	182		
<b>Average 1880s</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>36</b>
Jan-March 1893	100	46	35
June 1897		45	27
Sep 1898		38	17
Feb 1899	200	38	32
Sep 1899		38	30
<b>Average 1890s</b>		<b>41</b>	<b>28</b>
Feb. 1901		50	45
May. 1902		33	21
June. 1902			18
July. 1902			17
Aug. 1902			16
Sep. 1902			15
Oct. 1902		23	16
Feb. 1904		36	20
March. 1905	302	29	20
July. 1905		29	14
Aug. 1905		29	16
Nov. 1905		29	19
June. 1907		37	23
July. 1907		36	27
Feb. 1906		36	17
Dec. 1908		59	53
Sep. 1909		59	50
<b>Average 1900s</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>24</b>
Jan. 1910			10
Feb. 1910			27
March. 1910			25
April. 1910			25
May. 1910			25
June. 1910			25
July. 1910			30
Aug. 1910			30
Sep. 1910			29
Oct. 1910			27
Nov. 1910			29
<b>Average 1910</b>			<b>26</b>
<b>Average 1880-1910</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>

	Census	Registration	Attendance
6 Jan. 1911		44	29
6 Feb. 1911		21	21
May. 1911		25	20
March. 1913		40	
June. 1915		33	29
July. 1915		34	22
Sep. 1915		38	24
Jan. 1918		21	
Feb. 1918		36	
March. 1918		45	
April. 1918		51	
May. 1918		51	
Aug. 1918		45	
Sep. 1918		45	
<b>Average 1910s</b>		<b>38</b>	<b>24</b>
Feb. 1920		30	
June. 1920	160	37	28
Oct. 1920		40	
Feb. 1921		34	34
June. 1921		49	34
July. 1921		45	37
Aug. 1921		44	33
Nov. 1921		53	
Feb. 1922		39	
Mar. 1922		40	36
April. 1922		40	34
May. 1922		40	34
June. 1922		41	
July. 1922		38	29
Aug. 1922		37	31
Sep. 1922		37	21
Oct. 1922		37	30
Nov. 1922		37	31
Nov. 1923		27	
March-April 1925		39	
Feb. 1927		45	36
March. 1927		48	40
April. 1927		49	41
May. 1927		51	44
June. 1927		51	42
<b>Average 1920s</b>		<b>41</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Average 1911-1927</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>28</b>

Table 4  
The Boys' School in the Pueblo of Caxhuacan

	Census	Registration	Attendance
Dec 1880		50	32
Jan 1881		36	
July 1881		46	
April 1882		47	
Jan 1883		50	
Aug 1883		47	
Sep-Oct 1883		53	
Nov 1883		59	
May 1884		60	
Jan-July 1885	156	77	65
Aug 1886		78	
Jan-April 1888	163	80	74
Sep & Dec 1889		80	75
<b>Average 1880s</b>		<b>59</b>	<b>62</b>
Sep 1891		80	80
Dec 1891			76
Jan-March 1893	160	110	104
Sep 1898		22	
Jan 1899	100	40	
Feb 1899		54	48
Sep 1899		57	38
<b>Average 1890s</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>69</b>
Feb. 1901		48	40
Nov. 1901		49	42
May. 1902		53	37
Oct. 1902		51	33
Feb. 1904		64	54
March-Aug 1905	77	50	44
Nov. 1905	77	50	40
Feb. 1906		50	46
July. 1906		50	43
June. 1907		50	45
July. 1907		50	48
June. 1908		48	38
Sep. 1909		46	36
<b>Average 1900s</b>		<b>51</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Average 1880-1909</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>58</b>

	Census	Registration	Attendance
6 Jan. 1911		37	34
6 Feb. 1911		56	49
April. 1911		52	34
May. 1911		52	28
March. 1913		39	
April. 1915		27	17
May. 1915			16
June. 1915		29	17
<b>Average 1910s</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>28</b>
Feb. 1920		30	
June. 1920	120	54	44
Sep. 1920		56	
<b>Average 1921</b>		<b>51</b>	<b>40</b>
March. 1925		46	39
April. 1925		46	28
May. 1925		46	18
June. 1925		43	24
August. 1925		43	30
Nov. 1929		81	70
<b>Average 1920s</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Average 1911-1929</b>		<b>46</b>	<b>33</b>

Table 5  
The Girls' School in the Pueblo of Caxhuacan

	Census	Registration	Attendance
Jan-July 1885	72		
1888	102		
Jan-April 1888	121		
Jan-March 1893	91	82	70
Feb 1899	60	26	20
Sep 1899	60	26	16
<b>Average 1890s</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>35</b>
May. 1902		38	24
Oct. 1902		38	26
Dec. 1902		38	34
Feb. 1904		40	36
March. 1905	67	40	23
July. 1905	67	40	37
Aug. 1905	67	40	35
June. 1907		40	33
July. 1907		48	32
Dec. 1908		50	40
Sep. 1909		53	48
<b>Average 1900s</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>33</b>
6 Feb. 1911		46	42
April. 1911		50	43
May. 1911		50	38
March. 1913		41	31
June. 1915		28	26
July. 1915		27	26
Aug. 1915		27	25
Sep. 1915		26	24
Oct. 1915		26	23
<b>Average 1910s</b>		<b>36</b>	<b>31</b>
Feb. 1920	130	23	

Table 6  
Mixed School, Barrio de Chilococho

	Boys		Girls	
	Registration	Attendance	Registration	Attendance
Jan-March 1893	16	14		
Feb 1899	14	12		
Sep 1899	14	11		
<b>Average 1890s</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>		
May. 1902	22	20		
Oct. 1902	22	22		
Feb. 1904	23	21		
March. 1905	18	11		
July. 1905	17	12		
Nov. 1905	15	13		
Feb. 1906	13			
June. 1906	17			
June. 1907	15	13		
July. 1907	18	14		
Dec. 1908	18	16		
Sep. 1909	20	17		
<b>Average 1910</b>		11		12
<b>Average 1902-1910</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>		
6 Jan. 1911	14	13	16	14
6 Feb. 1911	23	9	17	8
April. 1911	23	13	17	11
May. 1911	24	12	17	10
March. 1913	25	21	22	18
Jan. 1914	21	18	11	9
April. 1915	12	8	7	6
May. 1915	13	10		
June. 1915	13	9	7	7
July. 1915	14	7	8	6
<b>Average 1910s</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>

**Table 6**  
(Continued)

<b>Boys and Girls *</b>		
	<b>Registration</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
<b>Average 1921</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Average 1922</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Nov. 1923</b>	<b>40</b>	
<b>March. 1925</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>April. 1925</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>June. 1925</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>April. 1927</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>May. 1927</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>June. 1927</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>July. 1927</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Aug. 1927</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Oct. 1927</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Average 1920s</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>20</b>

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\* After 1921 records for Chilococho no longer provide separate figures for boys and girls.

Table 7  
The Boys' School in the Ranchería of Xunalpu, 1908-1927

	Registration	Attendance
Dec. 1908	30	26
Sep 1909.	30	26
Feb-Nov 1910		23
Feb. 1911	25	22
May. 1911	24	20
<b>Average 1908-1911</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>23</b>
Dec. 1912		7
Jan. 1913		5
March. 1913	7	
March. 1915	12	7
May-June 1915	12	5
July-Aug 1915	13	6
Oct-Nov 1915	12	7
<b>Average 1912-1915</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>
Average 1922	40	
Nov. 1923	40	34
Dec. 1924	27	22
March-April 1925	34	25
July. 1925	34	21
March-June 1927	35	20
July. 1927	43	31
Aug. 1927	44	26
Sep. 1927	44	26
Oct. 1927	44	32
Nov. 1927	44	27
<b>Average 1920s</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>26</b>



Table 8

The Boys' School in the Ranchería of San Miguel (later Cinco de Mayo)

	Registration	Attendance
Sep. 1909	24	16
Feb. 1911	13	10
April. 1911	16	6
May. 1911	17	10
March. 1913	16	
March. 1915	13	9
May-June 1915	13	7
<b>Average 1910s</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Average 1922</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>28</b>
Nov. 1923	47	47
March. 1925	36	21
April. 1925	35	18
May. 1925	40	20
Sep-Oct. 1925	40	20
March. 1927	29	25
April. 1927	32	26
May. 1927	32	24
June. 1927	32	20
July. 1927	32	19
Aug. 1927	32	23
Sep. 1927	32	19
Oct. 1927	31	18
Nov. 1927	31	21
<b>Average 1920s</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>23</b>

**Table 9**  
**The Boys' School**  
**in the Ranchería of Vista Hermosa (or Putlunichuchut), 1909-1913**

	Registration	Attendance
Sep. 1909	21	14
Feb-Nov 1910		18
Jan-June 1911	23	12
Feb-Nov 1912	17	11
March. 1913	14	10
July. 1913		13
<b>Average 1909-1913</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13</b>

### **Sources for all Tables in Appendix Three**

All come from Archivo Municipal de Huehuetla, AMH.

Box 2, Instrucción Pública, 'Lista de alumnos que concurren a este establecimiento con expresión de sus faltas', Huehuetla 1 January 1877.

Box 3, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia de Instrucción primaria', Huehuetla 15 Feb 1881; 'Enseñanza primaria del pueblo de Caxhuacan. Noticia que manifiesta el número de alumnos que concurren a este establecimiento', Caxhuacan 30 April 1882; 'Exp. no. 8. Expediente de noticias estadísticas de instrucción primaria del pueblo de Caxhuacan por el mes de diciembre de 1889', Caxhuacan, 30 Sep 1889 and 30 Dec 1889.

Box 4, Instrucción Pública, 'Padrón de las niñas a quienes obliga la instrucción', Caxhuacan 1885; 'Exp. no. 2. Expediente que contiene los documentos y formación de la noticia general de Instrucción Primaria', Huehuetla 31 July 1885; 'Noticia que manifiesta el número de niños y niñas de 6 a 14 años a quienes obliga la instrucción', Huehuetla 14 June 1888 and Caxhuacan 15 June 1888; 'Padrón de las niñas de esta cabecera para quienes es obligatoria la instrucción primaria en el año de 1888', Huehuetla; 'Padrón de las niñas que existen en el pueblo de Caxhuacan a quienes es obligatoria la instrucción primaria para el año de 1889', Caxhuacan 15 Dec 1888.

Box 7, Instrucción Pública, 'Noticia de la Escuela Municipal de Huehuetla', 31 Oct 1883 and 30 Sep 1883; 'Noticia de la Escuela Municipal de Caxhuacan' 30 Sep, 31 Oct and 30 Nov 1883; 'Enseñanza Primaria en el pueblo de Caxhuacan', 30 Nov 1883; 'Noticia de la Escuela municipal de Caxhuacan', 31 May 1884; 'Noticia de la escuela de niñas de Huehuetla', 31 May 1884 and 'Noticia de la Escuela municipal Manuel González de Huehuetla', 31 May 1884.

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**Appendix Six**

**Tables**

**for**

**Huehuetla During the Revolution**



Table 1

Properties of the biggest landowners in the headtown of Huehuetla, 1920-1940.

Name	Year 1920		Year 1940
	Hectares	Fiscal Value in Pesos	Hectares
Heirs of Federico González	137	11,460	
Joaquina Widow of (Ramón) Mora	76	6,100	
Miguel Márquez *	?	?	75
Gilberto Hernández *	?	?	72.70
Santiago González	50	4,000	
Miguel L. Gutiérrez	48	3,840	
Melesio Mercado	40	3,360	
Miguel Espinosa *	40	3,280	
Gabino Mora *	38	3,240	
Miguel L. Reyes	30	2,400	
David Becerra *	24	1,920	
Rosendo Cruz *	23	1,820	
Rosauro Castro *	19	1,580	
Camilo Juárez *	16	1,500	54.80
Gonzalo González	18	1,440	
Pedro Lobato	15	1,400	
Onofre Ortuño *	15	1,260	
Romualdo Ronquillo	15	1,200	
Daniel Bonilla *	12	960	52.80

\* were municipal presidents (1900-1939)

Table 2

## Secretary and Teachers' Salaries in Huehuetla, 1917-1929

	1917	1918	1920- 1921 *	1922	1926	1927- 1928	1929
Secretary		\$45				\$ 78	
Huehuetla Boys'	\$60	\$75	\$75		\$90	\$100	\$100- 120
Assistant						\$53	\$60
Huehuetla Girls'	\$50	\$62	\$75		\$80	\$93	\$100
Assistant							\$45
Caxhuacan Boys'			\$35	\$39			\$90
Caxhuacan Girls'			\$29				\$90
Chilocoyo Mixed	\$30 (f)	\$30 (f)	\$45 (f)			\$46 (m)	\$60 (f)
Xunalpu		\$20				\$46	\$60
Cinco de Mayo				\$30		\$46	\$60

\* according to budget.

(m) male (f) female

Tables 3 to 10

Distribution of Pupils per Grade in Huehuetla

- (R) Registration  
(A) Attendance  
(AA) Average Attendance  
(E) Examined

Table 3

Distribution of Pupils per Grade at Huehuetla Boys' School, 1907-1929

	1907 (AA)	1913 (A) March	1915 (AA)
Beginners 1	34	31	25
Beginners 2	15	10	12
Intermediate 1	10	8	0
Intermediate 2	0	9	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>37</b>

	1921 (AA)	1921 (E)	1922 (A) May	1925 (A) Dec	1927 (A) Nov	1929 (A) June
Infants	50	28	20	n.a.	63	64
1st year	16	20	10	48	55	28
2nd year	7	9	15	10	24	13
3rd year	3	4	9	0	13	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>105</b>

**Table 4**

**Distribution of Pupils per Grade at Huehuetla Girls' School, 1907-1927**

	<b>1907 (AA)</b>	<b>1913 (A) March</b>	<b>1915 (AA)</b>	<b>1917 (A) Feb</b>	<b>1918 (AA)</b>
<b>Beginners 1</b>	21	19	19	26	24
<b>Beginners 2</b>	10	11	0	0	10
<b>Intermediate 1</b>	5	7	6	6	7
<b>Intermediate 2</b>	0	3	0	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>44</b>

	<b>1920 (A) Sep</b>	<b>1921 (E)</b>	<b>1922 (AA)</b>	<b>1923 (A) Nov</b>	<b>1925 (A) Nov</b>	<b>1927 (A) June</b>
<b>1st year</b>	23	13	16	18	19	24
<b>2nd year</b>	4	12	13	8	10	9
<b>3rd year</b>	10	8	10	9	11	10
<b>4rd year</b>	3	7	5	2	0	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>49</b>

**Table 5**  
**Distribution of Pupils per Grade at**  
**Barrio de Chilocoyo Mixed School**

	<b>1907 (AA)</b>	<b>1913 (AA)</b>	<b>1914 (A) Jan</b>	<b>1915 (AA)</b>	<b>1917 (A) Feb</b>
<b>Beginners 1</b>	10	14	11	13	24
<b>Beginners 2</b>	6	7	9	7	0
<b>Intermediate 1</b>	0	15	12	0	8
<b>Intermediate 2</b>	0	10	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>32</b>

	<b>1921 (AA)</b>	<b>1922 (A) May</b>	<b>1923 (A) Nov</b>	<b>1925 (A) Dec</b>	<b>1933 (A) April</b>
<b>1st year</b>	12	26	29	28	12
<b>2nd year</b>	3	1	4	3	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>22</b>

**Table 6**  
**Distribution of Pupils per Grade at**  
**Pueblo de Caxhuacan Boys' School**

	<b>1907 (AA)</b>	<b>1913 (A) July</b>	<b>1917 Feb</b>
<b>Beginners 1</b>	27	31	61
<b>Beginners 2</b>	21	10	0
<b>Intermediate 1</b>	2	0	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>73</b>

	<b>1920 (A) Oct</b>	<b>1921 (AA)</b>	<b>1921 (E)</b>	<b>1922 (AA)</b>	<b>1929 (A) Nov</b>
<b>1st year</b>	46	30	31	46	62
<b>2nd year</b>	10	10	12	10	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>81</b>

**Table 7**  
**Distribution of Pupils per Grade at**  
**Pueblo de Caxhuacan Girls' School**

	<b>1907 (AA)</b>	<b>1913 (A) March</b>	<b>1915 (AA)</b>	<b>1917 (A) Feb</b>
<b>Beginners 1</b>	30	22	22	32
<b>Beginners 2</b>	10	19	5	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>38</b>

**Table 8**  
**Distribution of Pupils per Grade at**  
**Ranchería de Xunalpu Boys' School**

	<b>1913</b> <b>(A) Dec</b>		<b>1923</b> <b>(A) Nov</b>	<b>1924</b> <b>(A) Dec</b>	<b>1925</b> <b>(A) Dec</b>	<b>1933</b> <b>(A) April</b>
<b>Beginners 1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Infants</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Beginners 2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1st year</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>
		<b>2nd year</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>29</b>

**Table 9**  
**Distribution of Pupils per Grade at**  
**Ranchería de Cinco de Mayo Boys' School**

	<b>1925</b> <b>(A) Oct</b>	<b>1927</b> <b>(A) Mar-Nov</b>
<b>1st year</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>2nd year</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>32</b>

**Table 10**  
**Distribution of Pupils per Grade at**  
**Ranchería de Francisco I. Madero Boys' School**

	<b>1933</b> <b>(R) April</b>	<b>1933</b> <b>(A) April</b>
<b>Infants</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1st year</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2nd year</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>30</b>

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Sources for Tables 3 to 10 are the same as those for Appendix Three



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